THE COMMONWEAL

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NOT TOO SOON FOR 1932

AS USUAL, the campaign for the presidential nomination begins a year and a half before the conventions. Smart alecks jeer at this quadrennially, but it is right and proper. It takes that length of time to sweep a situation up so that the really important candidates shall take the limelight, and, more practically, it takes that length of time to lay the ground for corralling the delegates to be elected in the following year. So the nomination canvass of 1932 is beginning none too early.

Predictions, in an open field canvass, are foolish so early, but it may be said with confidence that Mr. Hoover will be the Republican candidate despite his growing unpopularity in his own party and without regard to the question whether he can be elected or not. On the Democratic side it is evident that there will be a multiplicity of candidates, because for the first time since 1916 the Democratic nomination seems worth having; and that while it is preposterously early to say who the leaders will be in 1932, at present they are Governor Roosevelt of New York and Governor Ritchie of Maryland.

On the Republican side Mr. Hoover is disliked not only by the Progressives, but in the very home of the Old Guard; the dislike increases, and names like that of Senator Morrow are mentioned. However, Mr. Hoover will be nominated, in blind deference to the tradition that the sitting President must always be renominated. Nothing is more firmly seated in politics than that tradition, and both parties yield it unquestioning fealty. Yet it is a tradition only thirty-nine years old, and the political history of the country prior to Harrison's renomination in 1892 runs flatly counter to it. The real tradition is that except in unusual circumstances no President should have more than one term.

From Washington's time to Monroe's the people did not vote. The Presidents were virtually appointed by the party leaders, and a custom grew up of having the selection made by a caucus of the dominant party in Congress. This party was, except in John Adams's case, the Democratic. The elections were not much more than ratifications by the states, also Democratic. This arrangement was derisively styled "King Caucus." While it lasted, the handful of men who selected the President made it a habit to give him two terms.

But in 1824 the people were voting in a great many states, and by 1828 in nearly all. King Caucus was killed by manhood suffrage. John Quincy Adams, who succeeded Monroe, served only one term, and Jackson,

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who followed him, intended to follow that new tradition. Nothing prevented it except that the fight over the United States Bank, coming up just as Jackson's term was ending, compelled him to take another term to see it through. But the tradition of one term was firmly founded, and not a single President, after Jackson, was reëlected until the Civil War made Lincoln think it unwise to "swap horses while crossing a stream."

The Republican leaders did not agree with him, and someone else would have been nominated in deference to the one-term tradition but for the slick work of the Blair family in getting delegates instructed for Lincoln. He was reëlected, the Republican party continued in power for twenty years, and yet the one-term tradition was not broken except in the single case of Grant. Then the Democrats elected Cleveland, but he could not get a reëlection in 1888. In 1892 his successor, Harrison, established the tradition that is now followed. From that day to this it has been the assumption of both parties that the sitting President must be renominated, whether he can be elected or not.

The so-called tradition never met such a test as in 1912, when the Republicans renominated Taft, knowing perfectly well that anybody else in the party had a better chance of election. It was blind obedience to the short-lived tradition. He carried only two states, Utah and Vermont, and got only eight electoral votes. If the Republican party was so obedient to the Harrison tradition as to go to the slaughter-house with its eyes open in Taft's case, what earthly reason is there for supposing it will take a different course with Hoover, who, popular or not, is not so clearly destined for defeat? It may indeed be said that Hoover, unpopular as he is with the leaders, is no more unpopular than the man who started the tradition, Benjamin Harrison.

There will unquestionably be a lot of candidates before the Democratic convention, but most of them will be merely favorite sons who will fade out after the first ballot, or perhaps even before the clerks announce the result of that ballot. If Roosevelt and Ritchie stand out as the only serious candidates at this moment—which they unquestionably do—it is interesting to notice that both represent the same things. There is, it is true, some difference. New York has not yet got over a provincial way of thinking of Ritchie only as an opponent of prohibition, but he is very much more. He has stood out against paternalism and federal tyranny in every form as no one else has, in the four times he has been elected governor of a doubtful state. For that matter, New Yorkers have a tendency to fall into the same error about Roosevelt, who has been active and prominent in every field of public discussion for twenty years.

At any rate, the winter of 1931 is just the right time to start the campaign of 1932. There will have to be a lot of sifting done, not all on the Democratic side; for though Hoover's renomination is clearly indicated, the party itself is in great confusion about the issues and the President seems to share in it.

WEEK BY WEEK

ANY GIVEN country's line of policy regarding delicate and disputed matters is not likely to follow that straight line which constitutes the shortest distance between two points. Even so, the chart of Great Britain's Palestinian policy sets a record in governmental zigzagging. The Balfour Declaration, guaranteeing a backing of the Zionist experiment in the Holy Land, was a concession to the powerful and patriotic Jews who helped the empire win the war. The hedgings and qualifications and downright reversals of the declaration which have been more or less the order of the day ever since, have been concessions to the much more imperious pressure of the Mohammedan forces in the empire, especially in India. There can be no reasonable doubt, for instance, that the dissatisfaction of the Palestinian Arabs, which led to rioting and massacre in the Holy Land a year and a half ago, would have been summarily dealt with beforehand, if the British government had not felt the need of placating some 75,000,000 Indian Moslems. And following that tragedy, there has been a progressive tightening of attitude toward the Jewish claims, culminating in the Passfield White Paper which seemed to repudiate—one would have said explicitly to repudiate—any interest in Zionism where Zionism conflicted with the rights or wishes of the Arabian population. That this was the construction put by liberal and superior Jews upon the White Paper's indefinite suspension of Jewish immigration into Palestine, and drastic limitation of Jewish land purchase there, is proved by the resignation of Felix Warburg from the Jewish Agency, and of Chaim Weizmann from the presidency of the World Zionist Organization. The purport of responsible Jewish opinion throughout the world, whether indignant or resigned, seemed to be that Zionism had struck a stone wall. And fair-minded outside opinion seemed to agree, with regret, that the stone wall was more or less inevitable.

Modifying the White Paper

BUT IT appears that this was a mistake. Prime Minister MacDonald has just made public a letter from himself to Dr. Weizmann in which the White Paper is construed so favorably to Zionists that it is virtually construed away. Most important of all, the Premier's letter specifically denies that it is the intention of the government to check Jewish immigration "so long as it might prevent any Arab from obtaining employment," and specifically reaffirms the "absorptive capacity principle." The effect of immigration "on the economic position of the non-Jewish community" must, in general language, be considered, but this is not meant to imply "that existing economic conditions in Palestine should be crystallized." Again, in the matter of public and municipal works, the policy is laid down that "the claim of Jewish labor to a due share of the employment available, taking into account Jewish contribu-

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tions to the public revenue"—and not the Jewish proportion to the total population—"shall be taken into consideration." Finally, Jewish settlers may acquire land with very few restrictions; "close settlement of the Jews on the land" is declared to be "a primary purpose of the mandate," and that passage of the White Paper which speaks of "the importance of making available suitable land on which to place the Arab cultivators who are now landless," is defined as referring only to "such Arabs as can be shown to have been displaced from the lands on which they can establish themselves." The normally nomadic Arab, in spite of polite words about "congestion," "intensive development of the land," and "careful consideration of His Majesty's government," is apparently to be left where and as he was. Whether the paper is a triumph for Dr. Weizmann, who has shared in the negotiations of which it is the issue, or whether it follows, by some logic not yet clear, from the Indian conference, it will cause Zionism to lift up its heart again.

Powers of the Air

ALTHOUGH the radio officials responsible for the receiving and distribution of the Pope's broadcast speech in America do not agree with the opinion expressed in Europe—and coming from many quarters—that Soviet-controlled radio stations tried to interfere with the Holy Father's message "to all creation," there would be a certain appropriate fitness were the accusation proven to be true. There was a malignant, raving tone in the howling that for some time accompanied the Pope's voice that reminded many a listener of the chorus of demons in Newman's "Dream of Gerontius." The spirits of pride and self-sufficiency who give vent to such "sour and uncouth dissonance" in Newman's symphony of the soul's ascent might well be imagined to have striven to neutralize if not to overwhelm the message of the Vicar of Christ. As Senator Marconi said in a notable article in *L'Illustrazione Vaticana,* the radio, "which among the conquests of science seems to touch most closely the borders of immateriality, is exalted by this service which it now renders in the purest and most universal interest of the spirituality of Catholicism." The evil power of pride and human self-sufficiency now seated at Moscow, and dreaming of world dominion, has on more than one occasion indicated that it recognized in the Catholic Church the most powerful of all the forces which it must overthrow if it is to win the universal triumph to which it aspires. No doubt it did not fail to take notice of the new evidence of the vitality of that Church which was afforded by the Pope's world-wide radio speech. It is useless to blink the fact that there is a war being waged between the Church and the anti-God régime at present dominant in Russia, and battle has now been joined by the "powers of the air" on the vast and ever-growing radio front of a universal propaganda. One of the perhaps legendary but at least symbolically true anecdotes about Lenin is to the effect that he said to a Catholic priest on one occasion: "There are at bottom only two great international forces in the world, namely, Communism and Catholicism, and one must conquer the other." Communism is attempting to unite the world through the denial of God. Man worshiping his own image, is the religion of Communism. When the wireless station at the Vatican was blessed before being used for the first time, a new liturgical blessing was spoken above it: "O, Lord Jesus Christ, Who told Thy Apostles to preach the Gospel to all men, bless this complex of machinery destined to summon waves of air so that, being able to exchange the Apostles' words, even the most distant peoples may be gathered together in one family unto Thee." This is now, as always, the teaching of the Church: that to achieve the true brotherhood of man it is first necessary to know the fatherhood of God.

INCIDENTALLY, we may remark that it is one more of many apparently contradictory facts which are so baffling to those who do not possess a clue to their interpretation, concerning the Catholic Church, that the so-called "mediaeval institution" of the Vatican should have received its radio station from one who is the prime inventor of practical wireless communications—Senator Marconi. This is a somewhat paradoxical situation for those who take seriously the supposed irreconcilability of the Church and science, of Catholicism and progress. In the article above referred to, Senator Marconi gives an interesting account of the motives of the Holy Father in opening the Vatican radio station. His language shows that the eminent inventor has more than a touch of poetry and mysticism in his nature. The English version of his remarks, as supplied by the Associated Press, though quaint in places, is eloquent, and certainly nobody could be in a better position correctly to interpret the Holy Father's motives in this matter than Senator Marconi, who says: "Catholicism, which before radio overcame the difficult barrier of distance, instituting the universatility of the society of men through truth of the Gospel, finds today in this material instrument a new and providential medium through which the august head of the Church of Rome causes to be heard his voice by all the faithful over the whole earth. Swiftly and subtly, like thought, the wave of the word carries the wave of the spirit that spreads with strength and warmth of truth. The little state of the Pontiff today communicates directly with the great centers of our teeming industrial civilization as well as with the furthest and most humble provinces of Christianity where the legionnaires of evangelistic truth fight the daily and hard battle of faith. The voice of the radio, that in shipwreck serves to invoke aid, and that to men of commercial society quickens the rhythm of industrial operations, is today utilized by the navigator who has risen above the tempests of history, who brings the succor of truth and cares for the interests of all the faithful."

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IT WAS an appropriate gift which the trustees of the United States Catholic Historical Society bestowed upon Mr. Thomas F. Meehan at the testimonial banquet tendered to the editor of the many invaluable publications issued by that veteran organization— a pencil and a pen. The metal of which these tools of the writers' craft were composed was gold. The symbolical rather than the material value of that metal is what those who know something about Mr. Meehan's work will think about. The highest of all literary values is the gold of truth. What American writer has ever searched for it more assiduously, and found it more abundantly, than Thomas F. Meehan in his fifty years of service of the press? That the best years of Mr. Meehan's life and the most useful fruits of his pen have been devoted to American church history, and to Catholic journalism of the most constructive and enduring kind, is acknowledged and appreciated by those best qualified to know the inside facts of Catholic literature in the United States. They are part and parcel of our native Catholic tradition. The future of Catholicism in this land has been made more secure, and more certain of worthy development, because of the solid, enduring, patient character of the mass of historical research and writing accomplished by Mr. Meehan. Perhaps nowhere else in the world more than in the United States has there been a graver danger of Catholics losing the memory of their own national past, because of the almost irresistible pressure of more immediate and material cares and duties. And Catholics who cut themselves off from their past lose more than any other class in the community, because the continuity of the Catholic tradition is one of the most valuable assets of the Faith, both for those who possess the Faith, and for society in general. Nobody has done more to preserve the historical heritage of American Catholicism than Thomas F. Meehan, and we hope that the golden pen and pencil may maintain their invaluable labors for many years to come.

Worker in Gold

WHILE at times it seems to us that wars and rumors of war, both those with shot and shell and those in the none the less deadly but more silent and invisible forms of economics, make life increasingly hard, it is encouraging to have a little news of good being accomplished. Good is of course being accomplished all the time, but so quietly. An instance is suggested in the report of a special health commission in New York state. Since 1900, the report tells, the span of life in the state has been increased from an average of forty-seven to fifty-seven years. Since 1913 the death rate has been reduced from 419 per 100,000 of population, to 196 in 1930. Tuberculosis mortality has been reduced by more than one-half since 1913, and infant mortality in the same proportion in the same time. Typhoid fever, once prevalent, has become a rare disease, and diphtheria has declined about two-thirds since 1913. The report concludes with recommendations that it is expected will enable the above advances in the saving of lives to be continued so that in another ten years millions more each year may be spared from disease. All the coöperation, the goodwill, the charity and efficiency of numberless unsung and heroic men and women that goes into this accomplishment of life saving should be a constant restoration of our hope in the fundamental right spirit in the masses of the people. Life still triumphs over death.

The Living Spared

THE SYMPOSIUM on religion recently sponsored by the National Republican Club in a nation-wide radio discussion, in which Protestant, Jewish and Catholic speakers took part, is a hopeful sign that concurs with many others observable of late, that religion is coming again to be recognized as a practical factor in all political, economic and social problems. THE COMMONWEAL, through one of its editors, took part in that discussion, and it may, therefore, be worth while to place on record in its own columns what we conceive to be the chief issue involved. We took advantage of the occasion to point out that all men and women really base their thoughts and actions upon some fundamental belief—Communism, patriotism, nationalism, for example, or a supernatural religious view. The way in which any man thinks about his deepest belief or interest will be his philosophy. The way in which he behaves in regard to it will be his religion in action. This is undoubtedly a very crude sketch of the matter, but at least it brings us face to face with the central consideration—namely, the truth, or the degree of truth, possessed by the religion, whatever it may be, which is the determining factor of a man's thoughts and actions, or of the thoughts and actions of groups of men, particularly those groups which possess or aspire to leadership of the thoughts and actions of other men. Obviously if we act upon a false or harmful principle, our actions and their results will be wrong and injurious. This fact involves the problem of problems facing the world today. Patriotism, or the love of country, splendid virtue as it is when guided and directed by something superior to itself, can be a frightful danger to the peace and welfare of society when it becomes uncorrected nationalism. Science, unguided by something superior to itself, can and does become the source of materialistic philosophies and social forces full of deadly menace. Political and economic plans and parties, unguided by something superior to themselves and seeking human betterment, lead to mistakes and tyrannies, as in Soviet Russia.

The Great Debate

THE THING which is superior to nationalism, to patriotism, to political parties and philosophies of all sorts, and superior to human science, is, of course, the spiritual power of true religion. It is the belief in, and the application of the belief in, One Almighty God, the Creator of all things, including humanity itself—and

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the Maker also of all those absolute and unchanging natural, moral and spiritual laws which alone lead to human peace and happiness and liberty. The world today in large measure is either ignorant of, indifferent to, or in revolt against, those laws. Not until that ignorance is dispelled, and that indifference or rebellion changed to obedience, can there be any real hope for the permanent betterment of the misery of the world. We would be false to our own belief if we did not say further that we are not left uninstructed as to what those laws are, for they are declared and sustained by their divinely constituted teacher on this earth—the Catholic Church. Complete allegiance to that Church, of course, can only be for her convinced members—but she freely proffers to all nations and races who have not wholly given up all belief in a Supreme Personal God, the most necessary support and coöperation in their at present bewildered and blundering efforts to find and possess the tranquillity of true order. We realize that we are now stating highly debatable propositions, but this debate goes to the root of the matter, and it should be welcomed by all thinking people.

RASH predictions are constantly being made, but we believe that in the present case a combination of circumstances justifies a little rashness in prophecy. It is that in the next decade we shall see as radical a change in the methods of building homes in America as occurred in the manufacture of vehicles when the automobile replaced the horse and buggy. There has been a constant rumbling in architectural circles along these lines. New materials, such as stainless steel and a new lightweight cement, have suggested revolutions in building methods. These will yield more than just a change in conventional architectural shapes, or styles. That change is superficial and an old story. The results have sometimes been justified, but more often they show such an obvious, and inutilitarian, straining after effect that we are left wondering not whether they are beautiful, but are they really as ugly as somehow we feel they are? Some of the large mail-order houses that have their centers in that hotbed of radical innovations, Chicago, have already had the rudiments of what it is expected will be the new development. They have partially standardized and factory-cut houses which may be bought on the instalment plan, and assembled wherever the purchaser happens to have the ground to put them on. "The Economic Production of Workingmen's Homes," published by the Regional Plan of New York, declares standardization and factory mass production will cut in half the cost of building the simpler types of homes.

New Home-Building

WHILE productivity in the automobile industry has increased 172 percent, the pamphlet points out, productivity in the housing industry has decreased, in some of the housing trades almost 50 percent. "Strangely enough," says Mr. Grosvenor Atterbury, architect and city planner who prepared the report, "it is difficult to name a practical art which throughout all the centuries of man's civilization has made slower progress than the art of home-building. We are still using the little brick, the hand unit with which they built the walls of Jericho, and laying them today probably far less cheaply." Wall units, factory made, shipped by truck, erected by small cranes on the truck and keyed together, obviously would be far faster in the assembling of a house than older methods with small units cut by hand and slowly fitted and put in place, all by hand labor, on the site of the building. The building trades should not be disturbed at the prospect, according to Mr. Atterbury, who says, "cut the cost by scientific factory production and offer the buyer a really good bargain, well-designed, fireproof and substantial, involving but a small fraction of the ordinary upkeep of the present so-called low cost house, and you will open up a market even greater than did the original Ford motor car. As in that industry, in spite of labor-saving devices and methods—really because of them—there will come an enormous increase in the labor employed as well as the opportunity for the laboring man himself to make a really wise investment within his means." From other sources, we hear pretty well substantiated rumors that some of the most famous men in the automobile world are approaching the problem with all their capital resources and knowledge of modern production methods, expecting that the next great "break" in industrial development will be in this direction. Our hope is that due regard for beauty will be observed.

WAR, FAITH AND THE HOME

THE ANNOUNCEMENT from Russia of the drafting of what the Associated Press states to be "hundreds of thousands" of housewives for industrial —that is to say, factory—work while the state cares for their babies in large nurseries, cooks the food in large community kitchens, and does the laundry in large community establishments, has two serious sides: first, the potential mutilation of the lives of the Russian women; and second, a further economic threat to our own peace, prosperity and liberty through the turning of Russia into one great, homogeneous factory for the production of a stream of cheap goods that might wreck our industries unless we undertake measures as drastic as theirs.

In regard to the first consideration, the effect on the women themselves, the best we can see in its favor is that it may be all right for those that like it. The pitiful nightmarishness of it would be in the compulsion for women whose spirits rebelled, or who nervously or physically were too weak to sustain the relentless grind of modern industrial production where machines set the pace, not only in regard to speed but also in regard to repetitious regularity, a steady beat, beat, beat that can spell madness to those who cannot stand it. The things lost for this materialism gone maniac, are pos-

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sibly well lost to some who despise them: home, the calm and privacy of the home. But for others, possibly more delicate natures, it means the loss of sanctuary where they could work out some kind of private adjustment in a world which in a state of nature is infinitely various and only under the most brutal compulsions, such as those of the Sahara, is reduced to a rigid and standardized pattern. If we may mention the following without being suspected by our emancipated and sophisticated contemporaries of the rankest sentimentality, what of all the tenderly nurtured gardens that are the pride of so many women, however humble patches they may be of a few vegetables and a few common flowers? The loss and abandonment of these can never be compensated for by community gardens. In an altogether lay spirit, we believe there is a sacredness to private initiative in the manifold opportunities for enriching life in private homes, the appreciation of which determines the difference between a normal and amiable nature and one that is for its own great misfortune bitter and antagonistic. The drudgery in home life is certainly familiar enough to us all, if not from personal observation, then through the stark realism that has been so fashionable in modern letters; however, the point is whether industrial drudgery is any better, any pleasanter, and whether its impersonal and standardized products are better.

The revolters in our own midst against the possibilities of home life, are such, we believe, through malformations, through twists of nature and abuses of home life that very obviously do not constitute reasons for abandoning home life as a social form and the potentialities of it as a social ideal. Certain morbid, or extremely unsociable, natures may not be able to adjust themselves to the inevitable intimacies of family life. They are familiarly either painfully oversensitive and lachrymose, or else savage and hurtful. Many of our extremely cynical and neurotic women writers are public examples of the first type, and our so-called barnyard realists, from the urbane and wittily malicious George Bernard Shaw to the heavy-handed and melancholic Dreiser, with their obsessions on the malodorous and unpleasant details of life, are examples of the second. But to abandon home life because of them, would be like abandoning the life of a child because it had a rash on its chest. An unfortunate secondary consideration to this analogy is that they, like the rash on the child, unless dealt with with soothing specifics are apt to upset the whole system and cause a bawling and thrashing around all out of proportion to the degree of the hurt. Without intellectual breadth enough to realize their own affiliations, they are shock troops in our own midst for the Soviet Union's avowed purpose of world revolution and the regimentation of all of us in the Russian Soviets' pattern.

This brings us back to the second aspect of the Soviets' drafting of housewives for industrial labors—the threat this is to our own peace and liberty. It is of course conceivable that an awakened public consciousness in the United States may put such tariff restrictions on the importing of the cheap Russian goods that our own industries, and socially we, will not be forced to imitate the Russian methods in order to be able to compete in price with their goods. This, however, is something that will bear watching, as has been recently recommended by the congressional committee investigating Communism in America. A principal danger will continue to be the young intellectuals, so miscalled, for their youth has none of the happy characteristics of that state and their intellectuality is of a peculiar narrowness that seriously reflects on its temper and quality. These will continue to bore from within, to use the phrase applied to their activities in the official manuals for Soviet warfare. They will continue to pour their scorn, with their unrestrained enthusiasm for violent epithets and bombastic invective, on all the familiar homely and noble works of man. How they scorn that very word noble—yet, for a counter fact we often wonder how many of them ever contribute to hospitals, or do social service work, or make any little offerings to alleviate in any real way any of the suffering of fellow humans? No, this sort of thing is left for the home-making type of person to do, out of the bounty, the goodness of heart, and the leisure that home life persevered in seems to cultivate.

The shortcomings of our individualistic system, the economic depressions such as that of which we are acutely conscious at present, the inequalities of wealth, the slums where home life and any such things as gardens and a calm and sheltered culture are cruelly lacking, must not destroy our sense of value; or as ammunition in the hands of our social critics be allowed to overshadow the good accomplished by generations of heroic common sense and long-suffering men and women. As we have said, it is not the social critics who contribute to the alleviation of these social failings; it is the plain people, the quiet-spoken people who turn to and give a hand to the distressed—the conservative people who do not want class warfare and world revolution. Rather, they want to carry on the work of their heroes, of parents and generations they do not despise but reverence and love. They are constructive people who want to be left alone to work out their own destiny with self-sufficiency and recoup their strength for their daily labors in the privacy of their own homes.

Next to the Soviets' attack on the freedom of religion, on the right of the individual to worship according to his conscience and build and own sanctuaries for his worship which he may make as beautiful as his imagination dictates, the Soviets' attack on the home should be a warning to us of an imminent and malevolent tyranny. It is a warning that should encourage us to evaluate rightly the things we hold dear, to face the facts, and to arm ourselves with realization that there is a good fight to be fought in our times, and that mere supineness in the face of an enemy is not necessarily benevolence.

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FEATURES OF SOVIET LEGISLATION

By VIOLET CONOLLY

This is a story that we have been expecting some competent observer in Russia to tell—the story of human inertia that finally tempers the most frenzied social experiments. Here are signs of slackening in the hysteria of the Soviet masses, and this slackening will be a first stage in their return to human naturalness, to a willingness to live and let live, and a return to some just estimate of the achievements of other ways that it is only folly to believe are less constructive and benevolent than their own. When this happily occurs, they may be welcomed again to all the exchanges of trust and friendship.—The Editors.

SOVIET decrees of exceptional importance are usually mentioned in the press dispatches from Moscow. The more striking labor laws are reported by the International Labor Office. Apart from this, the rapidly accumulating mass of Soviet legislative material is scarcely available to the English-speaking public. As far as I know there is no current account of it published in English by non-Soviet agencies. On the other hand such basic information is no longer merely of interest to the expert. World economic depression, dumping charges, Soviet industrial and agricultural plans, social unrest outside of Russia, are all gradually awakening the man in the street to the fact that this strange land somehow concerns him and his interests very closely. He is more perplexed than helped by the flood of impressionistic literature on Russia that confronts him on all sides, while the real sources of reference concerning such essentials as the principles of Soviet labor and trade, the background of Communist propaganda abroad, or (by no means least important) the evolution of a new conception of international law, are only casually noticed.

In capitalistic countries legislation alone would prove a very inadequate guide to contemporary conditions in any branch of national activity. Innumerable forms of private enterprise—companies, boards, banks, educational institutions of one kind or another—regulate their affairs for the most part without legislative interference, and are free to alter their objectives and policy as they see fit. How different is the situation in U. S. R. R.! Here the scope and function of legislation is unique, embracing every detail of cultural, economic and industrial life. Three times a month the State Financial Press in Moscow publishes a "Bulletin of Financial and Economic Legislation" (*Bulleten finansovovo i Xoziáistvennovo Zakonodatelstva*) containing the collected statutes and decrees on: state construction and administration; education; professional training; finance; taxation, rates and customs; credit and banking; industry and trade; collective farming and agriculture; transport and communications; coöperatives; labor; social and unemployment insurance; civil law and legal procedure. It is an invaluable compilation.

Soviet legislation may be regarded as a barometer registering not only definite changes in policy but also tendencies and data of importance. Circumstantial, temperamental, fantastically exigent, it is seldom uniformly or synchronously enforced throughout the union. Nevertheless, the various degrees in themselves contain many subtle indications of the tempo of progress, the "cracks" in carefully nurtured plans, the curve of successive policies and the general mood of the body politic in U. S. S. R. Though there is none of the overt opposition that we associate with party government elsewhere, the post-natal course of Soviet legislation has its own peculiarities. Furthermore one must not be misled by the grandiose tone of any decree. The histrionic preamble, the note of imperious urgency, may in fact cut little ice. Should decree X, for example, be issued in March, it would be well to keep an eye open for developments in the form of amendments or annexes to the original proposal within the next few months. Then in July or August perhaps, the "preliminary survey of the results of the application [more often than not non-application] of decree X" may be expected. In many cases these results will be described as very disappointing—for the Soviets never shun self-criticism—and all concerned are solemnly adjured to be more zealous in enforcing government instructions for the future. The next stage in the progress of decree X will in all likelihood be "special measures enacted to ensure enforcement of decree X and the enlistment of proletarian aid for this purpose." Six or eight months after decree X was passed, another series of measures was regularly due, "concerning the discovery of non-execution of decree X and immediate instructions for eradicating regional negligence in the matter. . . ." So month after month the matter may drag on. Certain questions recur every "decade." In the new five-day week calendar, a fortnight is a "decade." The "Bulletin of Financial and Economic Legislation" appears once a "decade."

The verbosity which clogs Soviet legislation for the jurist, spending itself in recrimination of local backsliding or in vigorous self-defense, may be a most useful factor to the painstaking student of contemporary conditions. In many cases no specific publication will give anything like such a good crosscut of the situation.

Reviewing the mass of Soviet decrees and statutes for 1930, the most significant seem the restrictions placed on labor and the new financial program. The collective farming measures have aroused tremendous interest outside of Russia, but they are interesting more on account of their sudden unprecedented success in a very large area than of any innovation *in se*. Collective farming is an old plank in the Soviet socialization system, even if only successfully manipulated in 1930, and I therefore will not dwell upon it here.

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The year 1930 opened with a series of decrees deploring the large labor turnover, the inadequate "absorption of unemployed registered at the Labor Exchanges," the high cost and low standard of production. In a frenzied attempt to get rid of these evils (which had evidently been little improved by appeals and threats during the year), it culminated with statutes: (a) forbidding the Labor Exchanges to register workers voluntarily abandoning their jobs or endeavoring to change them; (b) forbidding factories to reëmploy such workers; (c) abolishing financial assistance to the unemployed (October); (d) ordering unemployed workers (skilled or unskilled) to accept any job, anywhere, as proposed by the Labor Exchange, indiscriminately as to whether it be their particular trade or not—under penalty of being struck off the Labor Exchange register and losing all unemployment benefits; (e) excluding Workers' Committees from participation in factory management and relegating them to strictly cultural duties; (f) conferring extraordinary powers on transport officials, in virtue of which workers may be summarily dismissed by foremen or managers without compensation and even held under arrest for various periods, on their instructions, on half-pay or none, for "disciplinary offenses"—not subject to criminal proceedings (October 20, 1930).

Such is the anomaly presented by labor legislation in Soviet Russia and the demands of the trade unions or Communists, elsewhere. Even during the worst trade slump, no employer in England, for example, would dare to employ one of his skilled workmen at a casual laborer's job, knowing that the trade union would immediately call the other workers out on strike if he did. Profit-sharing and participation in factory management are also part of the classic Socialist program outside Russia. There is now little trace of either in labor legislation in the workers' republic.

The present trend of things is all against the immediate satisfaction of the worker's demands. Production at all costs is the cry of the hour and the machine has taken its place as the idol of the revolution. The new "disciplinary code" (October, 1930), by which transport workers may be deprived of their liberty by higher officials without any legal intervention, is very significant. It is likely that such measures will in time be applied to all branches of industry as a means of removing "slackness" and "sealing up cracks in production." Thus the Soviet modernization methods recall those of the first great modernizer of the country, who built Petrograd—but not with free men.

Two far-reaching fiscal innovations were launched in 1930: the Finplan and the credit reform. The Finplan (see "Introduction to Finplan," published by State Press, Moscow, 1930) is an attempt to assimilate Soviet finance more scientifically to Soviet economics. The assumption is that every political form of government eventually evolves a corresponding financial system and that capitalistic forms of finance are an anomaly in U. S. S. R. This financial plan combines the state budget, the local budgets and "a statement of accountancy relations." The latter purports to trace all the transactions between the interconnected state departments, institutions, etc., and the movements of all funds from the socialized to the private sector and vice versa. Thus an attempt is being made to chart the course of every kopek in the country, so that the monetary resources of any section of the population may be more easily pumped in the desired direction.

Banking credit was substituted for commercial by several financial decrees last spring. This quick and extremely complicated change—which incidently required all departmental and "kolxoz" business transactions to be effected through and approved by the State Bank—evidently presumed greater adaptability and good-will on the part of its officials than they have shown themselves to possess. The subsequent credit reform decrees time and again complain that all is far from well in that domain. The *Gosbank* agents are accused of a lack of zeal in enforcing the reform though nobody seems to have yet realized that they could not reasonably be transformed into chartered accountants, "commodity advisers," brokers and several other things, by a turn of the legislative machine. Moreover the "Kolxoz Center" bitterly complains of faulty juggling with its accounts since the introduction of the credit reform.

For the rest there is an ominous harping on the need for advance payments of taxes, social insurance premiums, etc., which bodes ill for taxpayers in the future. It would not be surprising if this moral pressure shortly changed to compulsion, as in the case of the labor turnover restrictions a few months ago.

> Take notice. 6,000,000 illiterates are to be "liquidated" by November 1, 1931.
>
> *By order of TSIK. Kremlin I.VIII. 1930.*

> Let every factory and Workers' Faculty take instant measures to establish laundries, barber-shops and repairing work-rooms in connection with the premises.
>
> *By order of TSIK. October, 1930.*

Such trifles are the order of the day. But they cannot materialize with the same ease as they are enacted.

The most cursory examination of the Soviet legislative machine will show that in spite of Communist rigor, Russian officials retain much of their traditional laxity and that there are many discrepancies between the letter and practice of the law. This is inevitable in such a vast area as the Soviet Union, particularly with the present concentration of authority and direction in Moscow. Though other factors are certainly involved, the cases of sabotage occasionally alleged in industrial and technical administration seem to demand urgent decentralization. Moscow is too isolated from some of the largest capital investments in the country to warrant far-flung control, should the "brains of the works" elect to play an anti-Soviet game either for political reasons or from human cupidity unrestrained by a moral system higher than material satisfactions.

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THE LITURGICAL ARTS SOCIETY

By MAURICE LAVANOUX

THE DESIRE to foster a spirit of coöperation between all those engaged in the arts of the Church prompted a group of young architects, a few years ago, to discuss ways and means of achieving tangible results. Their efforts culminated in the creation of an organization known as the Liturgical Arts Society, under the presidency of Mr. Charles D. Maginnis, the architect. The details attendant on the elaboration of matters of general policy were discussed at a preliminary meeting held in New York late in December, 1930. The success of the plan is assured by reason of the enthusiastic support of men prominent in ecclesiastical and artistic circles. As a matter of fact, the response has far exceeded the fondest hopes of the original group and gives proof of a growing sentiment toward a truer observance of the spirit and customs of Holy Mother Church.

Pending the issuance of an official report it may be well to summarize the aims of the society. Briefly they are as follows: First, the creation of a consulting bureau to compile and disseminate information, and active collaboration between such a bureau and members of the clergy and laity who are specialists in subjects bearing on the various phases of Christian art. A number of eminent men in these fields have expressed themselves as eager to contribute both their knowledge and time to such an agency. Second, a series of lectures prepared by architects specially for seminary students. And third, the possible future publication of a journal which would preserve and disseminate the information collected by the bureau and which would publish informative and critical text and photographs of current outstanding work. These aims can be practically achieved with a little perservance and a wholehearted spirit of coöperation.

In this connection, a review of the work accomplished by liturgical organizations abroad may not be amiss. The following data are taken from the reports of the first international liturgical congress held at Antwerp and printed in the October-November, 1930, number of *Les Questions Liturgiques et Paroissiales,* published at the Abbey of Mont-César, Louvain.

The report on the work done in Belgium enumerates the efforts of old friends of the liturgical revival. First of all, the author, Dom Bernard Capelle, Abbot-Coadjutor of Mont-César, pays his respects to Dom Guéranger, who may well be called the fountainhead of this revival. Then he tells us of the excellent periodicals that have done so much to spread the gospel of true and living liturgical art: *Questions Liturgiques, Vie Liturgique, Revue Liturgique et Bénédictine de Maredsous.* Dom Capelle then voices a complaint often repeated and which applies particularly to the architects and artists in the United States, to wit: those who work for the cause are often inadequately informed. The coöperation of specialists in the various phases of Christian art will gradually lessen the force of this reproach and renewed interest in liturgical matters by the profession generally should help greatly.

In France progress has been slow and sure. The movement can boast of the early support of the late Cardinal Dubois and that other great scholar, Monsignor Pierre Batiffol. The report tells of the work accomplished in the early initiation of the children to the liturgical spirit, of the various diocesan groups of choir boys, of pilgrimages. All these, however, transcend somewhat the purpose of the Liturgical Arts Society. Various periodicals, published in Belgian abbeys, are read by all French-speaking people, such as the *Bulletin Paroissial Liturgique* and *L'Artisan Liturgique.* This last publishes photographs of modern work and informative articles of great interest. It also introduces to its readers the work of various groups of artists who specialize in religious art. The future publication of the Liturgical Arts Society might well follow the general policy of this magazine. The "Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie," edited by Dom Cabrol and Dom Leclercq, is of course well known and is a mine of information. Other works indicate plainly the extent of a revival of interest in the history of the liturgy, such as the recently translated book of Romano Guardini, "The Spirit of the Liturgy," and Dom Roulin's excellent book, "Vestments and Vesture." Nor should we overlook the series of translations of the original French collection, "Bibliothèque Catholique des Sciences Religieuses," published by the house of Bloud et Gay.

The delegate for Italy, Monsieur A. Bernareggi, professor in the seminary at Milan, divides the development of the liturgical revival in his country into three periods. The first, embracing the last quarter of the nineteenth century, consisted principally in the reform of sacred music at a time when Pius X was Bishop of Mantua and Patriarch of Venice. Subsequent action on the part of the Holy Father indicated his early interest in this reform. The second period extends from the beginning of the twentieth century to the war, and was a period of scientific study of the liturgy. The third period brings us to the present day. In order that the transition between the two last periods be made clear, Monsieur Bernareggi wisely refers to the comparison established by the Abbé Caronti between Monsignor Duchesne's "Origines du Culte Chrétien" and Cardinal's Schuster's "Liber Sacramentorum." This last has been published by Benziger Brothers under the title of "The Sacramentary." In Monsignor Duchesne's work, historical research is the prime motive. On the other hand, Cardinal Schuster,

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with historical research as a basis, constructs a living edifice of the liturgy. Now the liturgy is not merely a scientific study. It is the life of grace functioning in church services and in the individual soul. Its field is not solely the monopoly of scholars but is open to the mass of the faithful. The last period is particularly devoted to the reform of sacred art. Its most ardent protagonist was Monsignor Celso Costantini, now Apostolic Delegate to China. The society he founded in Milan in 1913, Societa degli Amici dell'Arte Cristiana, flourishes. The following maxim as part of its program may best illustrate its general policy: "Art should be treated as a prayer and a mission." In like manner does such a society and the new Liturgical Arts Society become a part of the general revival. The usual activity of the Benedictine monasteries, together with the help of other orders and the clergy, was conducive to a renewal of interest which had waned during the long months of the war. Translations of the missal and books intended to initiate the faithful to the spirit and principles of liturgical life are not lacking. Finally, conferences and liturgical weeks do much to foster a spirit of coöperation and mutual support.

In Germany the Abbey of Maria-Laach has always been a pioneer of the liturgical revival. There the guiding principle is a strict observance of its admirable symbolic spirit and supernatural life. The program of studies carried on under the direction of Abbot Dom Ildefonse Herwegen comprises patrology, exegesis, philosophy and the history of philosophy, pagan and Christian archaeology, positive and speculative theology, canon law, the biographies and writings of the saints, the decrees of Popes and councils, etc. A vast field indeed and the usual curriculum of major seminaries. Yet artists do benefit from even a bowing acquaintance with these subjects. Here again our own society might well find a guiding hand and an incentive. It is worth noting that Maria-Laach does not directly popularize the liturgy but seeks to reach the mass of the faithful through the diocesan clergy and the educated laity.

The report for England is from the pen of Dom Fernand Cabrol, of Farnsborough. It gives a succinct résumé of publications and societies devoted to the study of the liturgy. The work of Edmund Bishop is well known and I particularly commend to the attention of fellow architects his article on "The History of the Christian Altar" which appeared in the July, 1905, number of the Downside *Review*. Liturgical information for the laity can be found in the special columns of the *Catholic Times*, the *Universe* and the *Tablet*. A hopeful sign of the times comes from the recently organized Guild of Catholic Artists and Craftsmen. One of the objects of the Guild is stated as follows in a leaflet issued by Mr. Hector St. Luke, the secretary:

> To bring together Catholic professional artists and craftsmen in spiritual fellowship, attending the religious offices of the Guild and other functions for spiritual and material well-being of members and for the revival of a true Catholic and Christian spirit in British art.

Spain and Portugal owe much to the influence of the Belgian Benedictines and particularly to Dom Gaspar Lefebvre, whose "Liturgia" is widely read there in the translation by D. Antonio Coelho. The first liturgical congress of June, 1926, organized by Bishop Lima Vidal, gave official sanction to past efforts and promise for the future.

The liturgical movement in Poland is sponsored by all the bishops and is spread through the medium of the publication, *Mysterium Christi,* begun in 1929, intended particularly for priests, since the future of all progress in Poland depends, in great measure, on a well-instructed clergy.

In the United States we can boast of an active center of liturgical action at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota. Architects and artists who wish to keep informed can do no better than to become acquainted with the liturgical review, *Orate Fratres,* published at the abbey. The article in the December 28, 1930, issue on "The Social Values of the Liturgy" is worth a year's subscription to the layman. An article on "Liturgical Action in Austria" in the January 25, 1931, number will supplement comments here given on the liturgical movement in Europe.

Further activities at St. John's Abbey include weekly articles on the Mass and practical information on the current seasons of the liturgical year. These articles are sent to Catholic editors through the N. C. W. C. News Service, Washington, D. C., and have been a boon for the observant layman. During the months of June, July and part of August the abbey conducts a liturgical summer school. The schedule for the past year's courses indicates a preponderance of musical activities. However, courses on the spirit of the liturgy, the sacramental life of the Church and the liturgical year bear on the purposes of the Liturgical Arts Society. Nor must we forget the Popular Liturgical Library which now contains about two hundred books and pamphlets to which will soon be added an article on the art principle of the liturgy by Abbot Ildefonse Herwegen, O.S.B., translated by Reverend William Busch.

These various reports sufficiently indicate the renewed interest in matters liturgical and can serve as guides for the future activities of our own Liturgical Ats Society. It is true that the main purpose of the organization is the improvement of ecclesiastical art. However, as this can come about only through a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the liturgy, it is obvious that we must familiarize ourselves with some of the source material mentioned in this article. In so doing we will naturally share in the inexhaustible spiritual treasures of the Church. And that, it seems to me, is the core of the whole question.

The officers of the Liturgical Arts Society are: President, Charles D. Maginnis; Vice-President, Ides van der Gracht; Treasurer, Joseph Sanford Shanley; Secretary, Maurice Lavanoux. The present headquarters are at 74 East 54th Street, New York City.

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WAGES AND UNEMPLOYMENT

By HENRY SOMERVILLE

DR. JOHN A. RYAN is the master of social ethics whom I have followed as a humble student for a quarter of a century. My debt to his teaching is immeasurable. I make this avowal lest I now appear to be assailing his argument in THE COMMONWEAL of January 7. What I have to say in this article does bear on his argument, but I had intended to offer it to THE COMMONWEAL before Dr. Ryan's article appeared. Moreover, the economic theory which Dr. Ryan has advanced may possibly have a general validity, as well as a particular confirmation in the United States, even though England's experience does not tell in its favor. The theory that periodical industrial depressions are due to excessive saving by the rich and lack of spending power among the masses of the people, and that the remedy lies in a more equal distribution of the national income, has been propagated in England for forty years by the economist, Mr. John A. Hobson, but he has admitted that it does not necessarily mean that one country, by itself, can raise its wage costs without reference to the levels of competitors.

Whether Mr. Hobson's theory is true or false, it can be said without fear of contradiction that Britain has been following his prescription for many years, including the whole of the post-war period. A Cabinet minister recently took credit for the "Robin Hood legislation" of the present government, though it has not really excelled its recent predecessors in spoiling the rich to endow the poor. Britain ranked as an advanced country for social legislation before the war and her total outlay on social services in the year 1911 was £63,000,000. In 1928 it was £366,000,000. Broadly speaking, all this expenditure goes directly to benefit the wage-earning classes and the dependent poor. In a recent wages dispute, when the Committee of Inquiry was appointed by the Labor government, the committee gave its judgment that the benefits of the social services enjoyed by the workers must be considered in making the wages award.

What has been given to the poorer members of the community by social legislation has been taken from the richer classes by taxation. Beer and tobacco are practically the only articles of working-class consumption on which substantial taxes are levied. Much more than half of the national tax revenue comes from income taxes and duties on property passing at death. These taxes are so graduated that the larger incomes and estates pay immensely more than their proportionate share. Something like 70 percent of the direct tax revenue is taken from less than 3 percent of the population. The theory of oversaving stresses the case of those who are so rich that they cannot possibly spend all they receive and thus save "automatically." I do not know what amount of income is supposed to make an automatic saver, but in these days a man with £5,000 a year from investments would not be considered monstrously rich. In England he would pay more than 25 percent of his income in income tax. If the income is £10,000, he pays 35 percent. At £15,000, the rate rises to 40 percent. This is the effective rate on every pound after allowing for all abatements, etc. To show how small earned incomes are exempted it is enough to say that a married man with three children, getting £400, pays no income tax.

If unemployment is due to excess of capital, Britain has been disencumbering herself very drastically by means of death duties. An estate of £200,000 pays a duty of 26 percent, and if a man leaves £1,000,000, 40 percent of it is taken by the state. During the last five years the revenue from death duties has averaged £73,000,000; the average was £55,000,000 during the preceding five years. This may be regarded as subtractions from the national capital by taxation, for the revenue was not applied to debt reduction and the national debt is higher now than it was at the end of the war. We have not been left in doubt as to the efficacy of the fiscal measures for reducing the automatic savers. The yield of supertax has been falling for several years past, proving that the larger incomes are becoming smaller. In 1924 it was estimated by a very authoritative committee, appointed by the government, that the national savings were £150,000,000—allowing for the changed value of money—less than prewar years. The position has not since improved.

Wages have increased since 1914, and also since 1924. According to Professor Bowley, real wages, taking 1914 as base, had risen 8 percent by December, 1924, and 16 percent by November, 1928.

To recapitulate, the state in Britain has been taking surplus wealth ruthlessly from the rich and it has been bestowing consumption goods lavishly on the wage-earners; the supertax returns show that the larger incomes and, therefore, presumably, the automatic savers are diminishing, while the death duties succeed in dissipating private capital at a present rate of £80,000,000 a year, without any gain to the state's capital account; wages, moreover, have increased and are now something more than 16 percent higher than in 1914.

What has been the result of all this on unemployment? I will be so cautious as to refrain from saying we know the result. But we do know that unemployment has not been remedied. It is unnecessary to give details of Britain's unemployment problem, for the fame thereof has spread abroad among all nations. Suffice it to say that the post-war average, up to 1929, before the world slump came, was three times the prewar average. There is something more to be said. It

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occurred to an acute French economist, M. Rueff, in 1925, to plot a graph showing the movements of wages and of unemployment in England. There was a striking correspondence between the two curves, and in the chart brought up to 1930, as it is by Sir William Beveridge in the new edition of his book on unemployment, the closeness of the correspondence is uncanny. With a lag of about three months, the unemployment curve follows that of wages upward and downward as faithfully as a cart after the horse. I refrain from saying that policy based on the Hobsonian theory has been given twelve years' experimental test. The reply might be made that the test would require other countries less socially progressive to join Great Britain in the experiment. Mr. Hobson does insist that his theory explains only world cyclical unemployment, not British chronic unemployment. Moreover, I venture to say that the facts I have brought forward are interesting for their own sake, apart from their bearing on any theory. The facts will enable American readers to interpret the news they must now be getting from England of attacks on wages along the largest sectors of the industrial front— coal, cotton, railways and engineering. Readers will get much more news of the same kind, some of it sensational, from England during the present year.

Perhaps it should be mentioned, when writing for readers in another country, that the rise in wages has not been uniform throughout industry. There are disparities between the sheltered and unsheltered industries. Those workers whose products are sold in competition with those of other countries have not been able to maintain their standards, even with the best and oldest labor unions to help them. Railwaymen, builders, printers, employees of governmental authorities, central and local, and of public utility corporations, have been sheltered; textile, agricultural, mining, metallurgical and machine-making workers have been exposed to the rude blasts of external competition.

Their labor unions have been unable to portect them. Labor unions are frankly sectional organizations; they aim only to improve the conditions of their own members, not to establish wage-justice generally. Their operations in the particular conditions of England have produced gravely inequitable and uneconomic differences between trade and trade. This is a subject that calls for the serious attention of the Catholic economist and moralist. The working of group self-interest has no better results than that of individual self-interest. England is becoming desperate in search for an economic remedy for her trouble. At the moment most hopes are centered on a tariff! Sir Arthur Balfour, a great industrialist to whom successive governments have turned for light and leading and whose knowledge of trade is encyclopedic, has just declared: "Whether we like it or not, we are going to have tariffs placed upon us." He said that if Britain could do without tariffs she would be much better off, but the standard of living in this country has been pushed up so high that it is now impossible to push it down again to the level that would allow competition with foreign countries, and that therefore tariffs are inevitable. Economists outside this country will have difficulty in following Sir Arthur's reasoning. If tariffs enable a higher standard of living to be maintained, why would the country be better off without them? What was in Sir Arthur's mind was probably that as incomes from interest, salaries, wages, etc., are impossible or difficult to reduce directly, they must be reduced indirectly by a tariff which would raise prices! The standard of living would not be maintained. Sir Arthur Balfour said he believed the country was paying to the sheltered industries £200,000,000 a year more than it could afford. His comment with regard to the burden of taxation was that politicians always remembered the 24,000,000 voters and forgot the interests of the 2,460,000 people who paid all the direct taxation. Sooner or later England, and doubtless other countries, will learn that neither in politics nor in economics is there a solution of the social question. What we are now witnessing is the bankruptcy of a materialist civilization. The remedy is to be found in morals.

HIGH WAGES VS. EXCESSIVE CAPITAL

By JOHN A. RYAN

NATURALLY I appreciate the complimentary things which Mr. Somerville says in his article about his debt to my teaching. On my own part I can only say that I regret to see that he is inclined to depart in this article from the sound doctrine that his writings generally exemplify. It is true that he refrains from explicitly drawing the conclusion that the increasing wages in Great Britain and the heavy taxes upon the rich have actually caused the great amount of unemployment from which his country has so long been suffering; nevertheless, he at least is disposed to believe that such causal relation exists.

There is no evidence that this is the case. In Germany real wages have been declining the last two or three years and yet unemployment is proportionately as great in that country as in Great Britain. If high wages and the high tax levies upon capital were responsible for the great unemployment in Great Britain, they must have brought this about by depriving productive enterprises of the new capital which is necessary for expansion.

I have not heard it seriously claimed that any of the great British industries are suffering from lack of capital. If there be some slight evidence of this in

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one or two industries, the lack is due not to the utter absence of sufficient savings, but to the fact that a good deal of British savings are being invested in foreign countries rather than at home. If Hobson's theory is false as applied to Great Britain, its falsity must appear precisely in a dearth of capital in British industries.

Now the trouble with British industries seems to be not lack of capital but lack of market for their goods. This is particularly true of the export industries. In the chapter entitled, "Great Britain's Predicament," in his recent work, "The World's Economic Dilemma," Professor Ernest Minor Patterson declares that in the last half-dozen years British exports reached only 75 or 80 percent of their pre-war level in volume. And it must be borne in mind that the foreign trade of Great Britain comprises at least 60 percent of the total trade of the country. Curiously enough, Mr. Somerville observes that "those workers whose products are sold in competition with those of other countries have not been able to maintain their standards, even with the best and oldest labor unions to help them."

Here is the main cause of unemployment in Great Britain as well as in Germany. In the words of Professor Patterson, "for the world as a whole, plant capacity in many lines of manufacture has been expanded far beyond present ability of the world's markets to take the total potential output." This is the "world's economic dilemma," and at present no relief is in sight.

The difficulty is particularly baffling in Great Britain. Too large a proportion of that country's population is dependent upon industries that are making goods for export, in competition with several other countries engaged in the same effort to find markets for goods which the world seems unable to take in such enormous volume. It is difficult to see how low wages in those British industries which produce for the home market would enable the export industries to sell more goods and thus afford more employment. Mr. Somerville admits that wages have not been raised in the export industries.

He admits also that Mr. Hobson's theory of underconsumption and oversavings may have "a particular confirmation in the United States." It has. For myself, I take great satisfaction in saying that I have adhered to the theory whole-heartedly ever since I first became acquainted with it more than thirty years ago. I have seen the attitude of American economists toward the theory change from rejection to a considerable measure of acceptance. Not only economists, but the majority of business men, have thoroughout the present depression preached the doctrine that wages must not be reduced since the depression has been brought about through underconsumption and excessive plant capacity. The evidence for this interpretation of the facts is too overwhelming to be ignored by any realistic observer, whether he be an economist or a business man.

Fortunately for us who live in the United States, the prosperity of our industries depends only slightly upon our foreign trade, which is only 10 percent of our entire trade. We are in a position to have any kind of industrial arrangements that we desire. If we want high wages and increased consumption by the masses, we can have those things regardless of foreign markets or foreign demand for our goods. Unfortunately for the inhabitants of Great Britain, their industrial situation is vastly different. Their dependence upon foreign markets is enormously greater than ours. While I am totally unable to suggest a positive and immediate remedy for the British problem of unemployment, I am quite certain, for the reasons given above, that no remedy of the condition lies in the reduction of wages.

Mr. Somerville has some expressions in his article which could easily be misinterpreted. He says that the British state "has been taking surplus wealth ruthlessly from the rich and it has been bestowing consumption goods lavishly on the wage earners." I am sure that he does not want to convey the impression that the wage earners have been too generously treated by the state or that the condition of those of them who are employed is unduly prosperous. Nor do I think that he wants to be understood as implying that the heavy income taxes and death duties levied upon the rich are contrary to the canons of distributive justice. All that he means to say, I am sure, is that high wages (in so far as they are high) and heavy taxes are in accord with the Hobsonian desire for larger consuming power in the masses and a decreased share of national income going into savings and capital.

These changes which have taken place in British economy in recent years do indeed exhibit a degree of conformity with Mr. Hobson's theory, but they should not be represented even tentatively or hypothetically as bearing any responsibility for Britain's unemployment problem. As noted above, this responsibility would exist only in case the heavy taxes had caused a shortage of capital in British industries. The outstanding fact is that British industries are suffering not from a lack of capital but from a lack of foreign markets.

After disagreeing somewhat fundamentally with Mr. Somerville's economic argument, or economic hypothesis, it is a genuine pleasure to express agreement with the last two sentences of his paper. "What we are now witnessing is the bankruptcy of the materialist civilization. The remedy is to be found in morals." Only I would stress the fact that if we are to find a remedy in the requirements of morality, we shall have to do more than solemnly assert and reiterate that platitude. We shall have to apply the regulations of morality specifically, concretely and in detail to actual economic conditions and relations. In my opinion, this task is relatively simple as regards American industry. It is very far from simple in the existing conditions of British industry.

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AMERICA'S FIRST ITALIAN OPERA

By LORNA GILL

IN THE year of 1825, decided upon for the introduction of Italian opera into the New World, New York had still an Old-World atmosphere of leisure, a church on almost every corner. It was truly the "Golden Age" when gold did not rule, in a social and a literary sense, though big business was looming ominously on the horizon. The town was rich in literary talent—richer than today in proportion to its population of 166,000—with James Fenimore Cooper, Irving, Fitz-Greene Halleck and many lesser lights. The mayor, Paulding, reflected the literary atmosphere. He was the author of "The Dutchman's Fireside," the first American book to be read in Europe. The literary set was an important element of the society, that rather frowned upon the business man. Think of a New York ever like that!

Set apart from the beginning from its northern neighbors by its spirit of gaiety—the Dutch were responsible for that—New York had plenty of music and plays, while New Englanders and Philadelphians were living austerely under the ban of their anti-theatre laws, which included English opera. New York was visited from 1750 on by the best English theatrical and opera companies. Characteristic of the time, too, were the fashionable glee clubs, the Anacreon and the Euterpian.

The commanding figure of this musical and social life was Dominick Lynch, jr., "the acknowledged leader of New York society, the master spirit of music . . . to whose efforts were due the enterprise of bringing Italian opera for the first time to the New World." This is attested by Dr. John Francis in his "Reminiscences of Old New York," "The Diary of Philip Hone," and "The Letters of Henry Brevoort." Dominick Lynch was the possessor of a tenor voice of great beauty and cultivation. Tom Moore, it is said, had written some of his songs especially for him. The salient characteristics, of wealth, taste, social leadership, were combined in him for the successful launching of this enterprise.

His father, Dominick Lynch, was a man of distinguished Irish ancestry, living at 36 Broadway, a neighbor of George Washington, and one of the 300 who attended the Inaugural Ball at the New York Assembly Rooms. His benefactions to charity and the Catholic Church were many. Dominick, jr., a graduate of Georgetown College, inherited his father's business. With his own ships going back and forth to Europe, he was constantly *au courant* with musical affairs. Washington Irving, in one of his letters, speaks of their being together in London and Paris in 1824, "attending opera and giving him his taste for it."

The manager of the Park Theatre, Stephen Price, had given Lynch *carte blanche* as to financial inducements to attract Manuel del Popolo Garcia, the greatest tenor of his time, to produce Italian opera here. No matter how tempting in terms, it does seem extraordinary that he should have accepted them to come to a New York where few were capable of appreciating his art, where the Latin element was missing, the claque, the bravos and the bravissimos. But he had a family of young singers—the troupe was really a family affair—that may explain it.

Garcia, born in Seville of Spanish parents, began his musical education as a six-year-old choir boy in the famous cathedral. Krehbiel says in his "History of Opera" that "he came from a family of church musicians," and that "some writers, seeking always for Hebrew ancestry in every great musician, have pronounced him of that origin, but the statement is absolutely without foundation." His reputation was made first in Spain as an opera tenor, and as the composer of seventeen operas. This was followed by the conquest of the Continent, the foundation of a notable school of singing in London and the writing of an epoch-making book on the vocal art.

It was a new rôle that Garcia essayed—that of impresario—when he yielded to the persuasions of Dominick Lynch. The prima donna was his seventeen-year-old daughter, Maria, than newly successful in London.

They tempted fate in September, 1825, in one of Dominick Lynch's own sailing vessels—the signor, the signora, Maria, Manual, jr., and Pauline Garcia, then a little girl, later to become famous as Pauline Viardot; d'Agrisani, a *basso* of European reputation; Crevelli, second tenor; and Rosich, *buffo caricaturo*. They sailed up New York harbor on October 25. Handsome and courtly Mayor Paulding was surely there to meet them and Governor De Witt Clinton, then making his home at the present City Hall. The Westchester Light Horse and the brilliant fire department were on hand to form the escort up Broadway. Flowers were tossed from the brick buildings—the skyscraper of the town was the four-story city hotel, the Broadway—and by the picturesque throngs that lined the sidewalks: the ladies in voluminous skirts and bonnets; the always high-hatted gentlemen—in buff trousers and colorful coats of green and bright blue; some swinging gold-headed canes with swords inside, for the days of dueling were not yet over.

The energetic Garcia was hard at work twenty-four hours after landing, with an orchestra to organize, a leader to select, a chorus to assemble from those convivial glee clubs and the church choirs. "Signor Garcia respectfully announces his arrival," in the New York *Gazette* of November 19; "he has engaged the Park Theatre for Tuesdays and Saturday nights. . . . Rossini's 'Il Barbiere di Sevilia' is in rehearsal." The prices were: box seats, $2.00; pit, $1.00; gallery, $.25.

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How excited little old New York must have been! The girls besieged the newspapers as to what they should wear and how they should act. The newspapers were no less agitated; there were no music critics then, so they sent for a "scientific critique to a professor of music."

The Park Theatre was intimately connected with the history of music, drama and fashion. It was built in 1798 and the greatest English actors and the best ballad opera companies had trod its boards. It stood on the site of the Equitable Building, Park Row. The park was more spacious then, with handsome trees and elaborate flowerbeds. Inside, the theatre was in horseshoe form, with tiers of boxes and galleries, the boxes decorated by the lessees, as was the custom of the time.

The cast of "The Barber of Seville," sung on the opening night, November 25, was as follows: Almaviva—Signor Garcia; Figaro—Signor Manuel Garcia, jr.; Rosina—Signorina Maria Garcia; Bertha—Signora Garcia; Bartolo—Signor Rosich; Basilio—Signor d'Agrisani; Fiorello—Signor Crevelli; the orchestra, of twenty-four pieces, was led by Signor Luci. The rôle of Almaviva had been specially written for Garcia by Rossini. Incidentally, so was his Otello. No other comment is necessary on Garcia's talents.

The *Gazette* of the following morning (disappointed, it naively announced, of its expected "scientific critique"), wrote: "An assemblage of ladies so numerous, so fashionable, so elegantly dressed, has perhaps never been seen in an American theatre. . . . The audience was surprised, delighted. . . . Repeated plaudits. . . . Signor Garcia indulges in a florid style of singing, with his fine voice, taste, admirable ear, and brilliancy of execution." Maria, however, was the hit of the evening. "Her ravishing person served to swell the tide of her ravishing voice," Dr. John Francis says. This gifted girl possessed a voice of three-octave range.

Manual Garcia, jr., created some stir, but this impression was not lasting. New York was not long in coming to the just conclusion that his was not a great voice. Fame was to be achieved in another rôle, as the authority of the nineteenth century on the vocal art, and as the teacher of Jenny Lind. He lived beyond the century mark. Of d'Agrisani, Dr. Francis wrote: "His voice seemed as the peal of the great organ, at Haarlem, Holland." Not a word about the chorus, though we are specially curious about them.

Though there was no elaborate scenery, no electric lights (gas was installed in the theatre in 1823), there was a brilliant social background made up of the fashionables from Broadway and Greenwich Street. There were fancy gentlemen with bobbed, powdered hair, stocks *sentimentale,* ruffled shirts, dangling fobs, coats of Prussian blue, trousers of light buff cut *à la Paris* (fitting tightly and strapped under the ankle, like spats); ladies in hooped skirts and whale-boned waists, curls on their temples. There was no steam heat, but there were plenty of warming spirits, old Madeira and fruity port at the lobby bar.

"Our own Almaviva," as Dr. Francis calls Dominick Lynch, was surrounded by his cronies—Philip Hone, diarist, Julian Verplank, Henry Brevoort, Samuel Ward, Anthony Bleeker (Irving was still in Europe) and Mayor Paulding. The writers of patriotic songs—Fenno Hoffman, Samuel Woolworth—and the versatile Morse must have been among those present. We know positively that James Fenimore Cooper (then on the last pages of "The Last of the Mohicans"), Fitz-Greene Halleck, "the Poet of Society," and Joseph Bonaparte, the ex-King of Spain, were in the audience. And most regal of all, the notorious Madame Jumel wearing the tiara of sapphires once the possession of the Empress Josephine.

Afterward, society and artists assembled at Dominick Lynch's "festive board." I wonder for which the men of New York were more grateful—Italian opera or the importation of Château Margaux.

"Il Barbiere" proved so popular that it was given twenty-three times in the season of ten months. Rossini's "Tancredi" and "Otello" also played to big houses. Edmund Kean, the famous English actor, present at its first performance, made an address at the conclusion of the opera on the great talents of Garcia as singer and actor, inviting the troupe to see him in the same rôle a few nights later. Rossini's "Semiramide," "Turko in Italio" and "La Cerentola" were also produced, as well as some of the operas of Cimarosa, Garcia's "L'Amante Astutu," "La Filia dell'Aria," and Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

The production of the latter was due to the efforts of its librettist, Lorenzo da Ponte, an adventurous gentleman obliged to flee various governments and creditors finally to seek a haven here. The first teacher of Italian at Columbia College, he collected money from his friends and pupils to defray the extra expense of production. The opera was given ten times. Aside from this, da Ponte had absolutely no part in the enterprise of introducing Italian opera into America.

As the season advanced, Maria became its bright particular star. This girl, born in a nest of nightingales, and subjected to an almost cruel vocal discipline by a stern father, was really a great artist at seventeen. Four months after the opening, there was a scandal, besides, to whet the public appetite. Fitz-Greene Halleck had fallen under the spell of her beauty and talent. But poets are poverbially poor. Garcia was furious and forbade future friendship between them. Then a presumably wealthy French merchant of fifty, M. Malibran, presented himself, offering marriage, and the story goes that the despotic parent forced Maria to marry him in return for a promise of 100,000 francs, for the loss of her services. Six months later Malibran was declared a bankrupt and thrown into a debtor's prison. Garcia's plans and calculations were upset. He brought the season to a close at once, and departed for Mexico with the troupe, leaving Maria behind to make the best of her unfortunate marriage. Garcia had actually prolonged the season longer than he had

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intended, however, because of its financial success; the gross receipts for ten months were $59,685, an average night yielding $700.

Maria Malibran's knowledge of English prepared the way for fresh triumphs in English opera and English versions of French and Italian operas at the New Bowery Theatre, built in 1826. She received $600 a night, a tremendous sum for those days, and indeed more than some of the Metropolitan stars are receiving today. She sang also on Sundays at Grace Church and St. Peter's in Barclay Street; and at concerts in Niblo's Saloon. Her final appearance was in September 28, 1827. The following year she created a sensation on the Continent.

It is gratifying to think that one of the greatest singers of all time should have come into the first flush of her fame on these shores. "Jenny Lind was but a partial echo of her," said Dr. Francis in 1857. "This family of Spanish musicians of . . . genius and originality," to quote Chorley, the authority in England on the music of the nineteenth century, "have left a permanent impress on the records of vocal expression."

Garcia's financial success was not to be repeated until our own time under Gatti-Casazza.

Winter Futurities

Dark earth, cold sky,
  And air as still as death,
Now hold the world
  In a dim ecstasis,
Where yet the sigh
  Of spring and summer's breath,
And buds unfurled,
  Are far futurities.

Yet out of earth
  Must come new blossoming
Faint forms and fair,
  And little leaves that stir
With vagrant mirth,
  And lift up lips to spring,
Lilting an air
  Where yet no noises were.

And these stark boughs,
  Stripped bare, unlovely, dead,
Will in their time
  Be healed of their scars;
Their greenness house
  Small birds that long have fled
The winter's rime
  And winter's colder stars.

Before my eyes
  Will pass a lacy pall
Of drifting clouds
  And birds the whole day long,
And from these skies
  Upon my ears will fall
At morning, lauds,
  At night, their evensong.

GILBERT BLAKE.

A SINGING NOVELIST

By JOSEPH J. REILLY

JUST seventeen years ago on a Boston bookstall marked "Your choice, ten cents," I chanced upon a slender brown volume. It contained thirty-five poems, all brief, and bore the copywright date, 1903, beneath the legend: "Boston, Richard G. Badger, The Gorham Press." I had already made the acquaintance of the author in a collection of little-known short stories which were distinguished by so rare a touch and so keen a flavor of life that I at once predicted great things of her future. To meet her thus in the guise of a poet, came with a shock of surprise. I had not dreamed that she had that gift of song.

To chance upon this stranger volume was a joy, but to discover it on a bargain shelf, its fortunes so sadly fallen, brought a sigh. Today however I sigh no more, for its fortunes have risen mightily. Cinderella has shaken the dust of the chimney-corner from her feet and is numbered among the elect. That slender volume now occupies a place in special catalogues which are devoted to rare items and to first editions.

What was this little treasure trove? A paper label (with orange-colored decoration) pasted to its modest brown cover bears the title, "April Twilights," by Willa Sibert Cather.

In Miss Cather's prose is a distinction equaled (but not surpassed) by two other American novelists, Edith Wharton and Thornton Wilder. Similarly, in these poems, is a distinction delicate and difficult to analyze but unmistakable. It clings to every one of them like a fragrance. It is in such single lines as that which calls a melody at night "Tender as dawn, insistent as the tide," or that which tells of a Roman emperor who spent on a favorite "Honor and treasure and red fruits of war"; but in the finest of these poems it is all pervasive like the scent of lavender in old lace. Here is a typical instance in which the seventeenth-century Herrick lives again:

> "Alas, that June should come when thou didst go;
> I think we passed each other on the way;
> And seeing thee, the summer loved thee so
> That all her loveliness she gave away;
> Her rare perfumes, in hawthorn boughs distilled,
> Blushing, she in thy sweeter bosom left,
> Thine arms with all her virgin roses filled,
> Yet felt herself the richer for thy theft;
> Beggared herself of morning for thine eyes,
> Hung on the lips of every bird the tune,
> Breathed on thy cheek her soft vermilion dyes,
> And in thee set the singing heart of June.
> And so, not only do I mourn thy flight,
> But summer comes despoiled of her delight."

A deeper passion than Herrick's lies below the surface of that sonnet, but passion in these poems is never hectic nor unrestrained, never overreaches itself or leaves one with a sense of exhausted emotions. It is not that the love motif is rare in "April Twilights," but that love is here (as Mrs. Craigie once said it was with the Celt) a sentiment rather than a passion. The note is soft, not insistent; it is reminiscent of the spirit rather than of the body; it is acquainted little with triumph, much with tears. In "Thou Art the Pearl" is the rare note of triumph, but it is toned down to give one a sense of the lover's awe, kneeling and adoring, in the presence of beauty and its mystery:

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"I read of knights who laid their armor down,
And left the tourney's prize for other hands,
And clad them in a pilgrim's somber gown,
To seek a holy cup in desert lands.
For them no more the torch of victory;
For them lone vigils and the starlight pale,
So they in dreams the Blessed Cup may see—
Thou art the Grail!

"An Eastern king once smelled a rose in sleep,
And on the morrow laid his scepter down.
His heir his titles and his land might keep—
The rose was sweeter wearing than the crown.
Nor cared he that its life was but an hour,
A breath that from the crimson summer blows,
Who gladly paid a kingdom for a flower—
Thou art the Rose!

"A merchant man, who knew the worth of things,
Beheld a pearl more priceless than a star;
And straight returning, all he hath he brings
And goes upon his way, ah, richer far!
Laughter of merchants of the market place,
Nor taunting gibe nor scornful lips that curl,
Can ever cloud the rapture on his face—
Thou art the Pearl!"

In mentioning the Celt and his love as a sentiment rather than a passion, I do not mean to imply that there is a Celtic strain in Miss Cather, although these poems encourage the surmise. For often the Celtic note appears, elusive enough in all truth and yet not to be missed. Listen for it in "In Media Vita" whose first stanza runs thus:

"Streams of the spring a-singing,
Winds o' the May that blow,
Birds from the Southland winging,
Buds in the grasses below.
Clouds that speed hurrying over,
And the climbing rose by the wall,
Singing of bees in the clover,
And the dead, under all!"

It is that last line which does it, coming like sudden tears after laughter, and revealing memories which are too poignant to forget.

Here is another instance, a little more Celtic in tone though not in sentiment:

"Grandmither, gie me your still, white hands, that lie upon your breast,
For mine do beat the dark all night and never find me rest;
They grope among the shadows an' they beat the cold black air,
They go seekin' in the darkness, an' they never find him there,
An' they never find him there."

Lacrimae rerum! In nearly all the poems in this slender volume the tears of things are near. The "sad earnestness" which Newman found in Horace flows like an undercurrent through lyrics that are but too aware of life and summer, of roses and love. Sometimes this sadness is mingled with languor, as if tears had left the singer no strength for rebellion or had brought her to acquiescence at the last. Sometimes it is touched with hopelessness, as if aspirations and golden dreams had perished beyond the power of any magic to restore them. Sometimes it is wedded to a yearning tenderness that goes as deep as any passion, as in "I Have No House for Love to Shelter Him," "The Poor Minstrel" and this sonnet, "Eurydice":

"A bitter doom they did upon her place:
She might not touch his hand nor see his face
The while he led her up from death and dreams
Into his world of bright Arcadian streams.
For all of him she yearned to touch and see,
Only the sweet ghost of his melody;
For all of him she yearned to have and hold,
Only the wraith of song, sweet, sweet and cold.
With only song to stop her ears by day
And hold above her frozen heart alway,
And strain within her arms and glad her sight,
With only song to feed her lips by night,
To lay within her bosom only song—
Sweetheart! the way from Hell's so long, so long!"

Sometimes the note of sadness springs from a piercing sense of the soul's loneliness. It is a dominant note with certain rare individuals even as unlike as Newman and Joseph Conrad, and Browning has let one of his lovers give voice to it unforgettably in "Two in the Campagna." For all of us, whether we will or no, the hour strikes when we find ourselves alone, in spirit even more utterly than in body. There are recesses of the soul where none may follow and where not even love's self may find the way. It is in such an hour as this that Miss Cather writes "L'Envoi":

"Where are the loves that we have loved before
When once we are alone, and shut the door?
No matter whose the arms that held me fast,
The arms of Darkness hold me at the last.
No matter down what primrose path I tend,
I kiss the lips of Silence in the end.
No matter on what heart I found delight,
I come again unto the breast of Night.
No matter when or how love did befall,
'Tis Loneliness that loves me best of all,
And in the end she claims me, and I know
That she will stay, though all the rest may go.
No matter whose the eyes that I would keep
Near in the dark, 'tis in the eyes of Sleep
That I must look and look forever more,
When once I am alone, and shut the door."

At least two of Miss Cather's poems are colored by an irony more sad than bitter whose implications go deep. In "Paradox" the night is made beautiful by a song; surely, such melody is the voice of Ariel, "proud prince of ministrelsy." In its witchery

"The heart of night and summer stood confessed.
And I rose aglow and flung the lattice wide—
Ah jest of art, what mockery and pang!
Alack, it was poor Caliban who sang."

In "The Encore" a poet is praised for a song. But the praise is belated; it was withheld from him in the day when he sought it and deserved it most, in the hour of his first fine careless rapture; it is given to him now that his golden note is fled and his glad confident morning gone forever. The song they laud now was "done lang syne and was its own delight."

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"When I came piping through the land,
One morning in the spring,
With cockle-burs upon my coat,
'Twas then I was a king:
A mullein scepter in my hand,
My order daisies three,
With song's first freshness on my lips—
And then ye pitied me!"

In all her poems Miss Cather avoids subtleties, symbols, abstractions. She has the true poet's eye for the concrete and the true novelist's interest in men and women. It is the heart which lures her, love, tears, dreams of dear but unforgotten yesterdays, revolt against blindness to beauty, a sense of the essential loneliness of life. Even when Miss Cather conjures up a scene known to history for two thousand years she envisions it as the drama of human hearts that yearn, and yearning, know passion and folly. Here is one of the most perfect poems in "April Twilights," in which, for a golden moment, Anthony and his Egypt flit from out the eternal shadow:

"The dream of all the world was at his feet:
Her eyes were heavy with the night of fate,
When, from the purple couch whereon she sate,
She rose, and took a jewel that was meet
For a queen's breast, where royal pulses beat—
A milk-white pearl, her milk-white bosom's mate,
Dropped in the golden chalice at his plate,
And to his lips held up the nectar sweet
And bade him drink the cup of destiny.
How shall he pledge again? by what emprise
A chalice find that holds a kingdom's fee?
Perchance in that charmed liquor he descries
A madman, raving while his galleys flee,
Who casts a world into the wine-dark sea."

Even in the two poems of nature presented in "April Twilights" it is the human note, expressed in "Prairie Dawn," implied in "White Birch in Wyoming," that gives to each its poignant beauty. Here is "Prairie Dawn":

"A crimson fire that vanquishes the stars;
A pungent odor from the dusty sage;
A sudden stirring of the huddled herds:
A breaking of the distant table-lands
Through purple mists ascending and the flare
Of water ditches silver in the light;
A swift, bright lance hurled low across the world;
A sudden sickness for the hills of home."

Even when Paris is sung "pillared with pride, the city of delight," with her "fields elysian," her "towers of Notre Dame," her "silver Seine," we are to understand that her glory lies not in her loveliness but in the souls that toiled and wrought and thought for her and of whose ideal of beauty she is as a symbol:

"Wherever men have builded hall or fane
Red war hath gleaned for her and men have slain
To deck her loveliness. I feel again
That joy which brings her art to faultless flower,
That passion of her kings, who, reign on reign,
Arrayed her star by star with pride and power."

"April Twilights" appears in current booklists and in modern garb. But while it contains a few new poems it omits, alas! a round dozen from the original edition of 1903. I state this because I have quoted here (in whole or in part) six of these "outcasts" as among the best examples of Miss Cather's gift. It might seem unchivalrous to remark that poets are often uncertain appraisers of their own verse; instead let it be conceded, that critics, however well-intentioned, are nevertheless notoriously perverse.

COMMUNICATIONS

OUR BRETHREN TO THE SOUTHEAST

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: When you meet an inhabitant of the United States who betrays a woful ignorance of South America you may be amused, unless he is a Catholic. Then you are irritated and perhaps also alarmed. For in a Catholic ignorance of that continent is both annoying and dangerous. The population is nearly all Catholic, and though this does not mean that they are all as faithful to their religious duties as they ought to be, it does mean that they live in an atmosphere impregnated with Catholicism, that they have received the Mediterranean civilization in a purer form than we have, that in consequence they manifest that refinement and charm one associates with "Latins." Hence there ought to be intimate and frequent communication between the Catholics of the two continents, a Catholic Pan-Americanism. Each group can learn from the other. They can profit by studying how we are attempting to solve certain practical problems that are now beginning to loom large on their horizon, and they can be to us a source of needed inspiration in certain of the higher elements of religious and intellectual life. In fact, the Catholics of one continent know little about those of the other; but the situation is hopeful because it is being recognized on both sides. Here are a few modest suggestions to the Catholics of the United States which may help a little.

We ought to know the geography, the topography and the political conditions of South America. The first point to keep in mind is that South America is not "south." A line drawn on the map from the city of New York to the South Pole will pass through the Pacific Ocean far west of Valparaiso, which shows that South America extends much further east than the United States, a simple fact supposedly taught in school but seemingly forgotten. A friend who rejoices in the possession of several university degrees said to me once: "I suppose that when you go to Chile you have to cross to San Francisco and take the steamer from there." Doubtless one could go that way, but I have never heard of anyone who did.

The next point to remember is that, since much of South America lies south of the equator, the seasons in those regions are the reverse of ours. Thus the winter in Buenos Aires comes in June, July and August (approximately), spring begins in September, the Christmas vacation coincides with the beginning of the summer vacation, and the schools reopen for the autumn term in March. This is convenient for us, for on visiting Buenos Aires or Santiago in July we find the city in the full tide of winter activity, universities in session, theatres and opera going on, social life in full swing. Yet, on returning last September from the wintry blasts of Argentina to the torrid heat of Maryland I was greeted with "Don't you find it very hot in South America?" And I have been told of one young man who left New York in June for Buenos Aires and, under the impression that he was embarking for a land of tropical heat, took along only light summer clothing. Landing in Buenos Aires early in July, the poor chap was nearly frozen.

The third point is that South America is spoken of as though

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it were all one country and about the size of Delaware. It is a continent nearly four thousand miles long and about three thousand miles wide, divided into a number of distinct states that differ considerably from one another in race, in customs and in language. Last winter (about the end of August) a member of Congress, endued with the broad culture distinctive of that body, electrified his Brazilian hosts at a banquet in Rio de Janeiro by assuring them that before his next visit to their country he would prepare himself by learning Spanish. That was about as tactless a remark as he could have made, for the Brazilians resent (and rightly) the assumption that their language is Spanish.

Lastly, South America is not an easy place to get about in. The distances are considerable and the mountains are high, so land travel is necessarily slow and difficult. For example: The fastest steamer takes five days for the run from Callao to Valparaiso, and the railway journey from Santiago to Buenos Aires takes thirty-five hours. A visit to such spots as Cuzco or La Paz is no light jaunt, and a venture into the interior may easily assume the proportions of an expedition.

I might run on longer, imparting elementary information about South America for the enlightenment of the educated, but I want to get to a point of much higher importance. While Catholics of this country have been thinking of South America (when they thought of it at all) as a land of Incas, snakes and revolutions, their Protestant compatriots have for generations been attending to it pretty briskly. You will find down there numerous Protestant churches, schools and clubs, supported largely by money from the United States, and a fair amount of proselytizing has been going on which has certainly not tended to increase the popularity of the northern republic. The ecclesiastical authorities would welcome our advice and assistance in handling this situation, for they know that we have experience in that line. With very little effort and no trouble we could aid them. Their most urgent need is Catholic clubs for working boys and Catholic commercial schools laying special stress on English. A South American boy with commercial ambitions absolutely needs English and would go to the moon to get it—at present he goes to the Methodists. The people of the United States have the reputation of being generous and quick. Well, here's an opportunity for them to show that they deserve it. So far, after talking and writing on this topic for a year I seem to have accomplished nothing.

And there is another department in which South America is seeking our help. In every large city of South America is a colony of citizens of the United States residing there temporarily or permanently in connection with business. Of these many are Catholics and while some places have English-speaking priests for them, other places have not. Here are numbers of our own people hailing from our own cities and towns, with little or no opportunity for hearing an English sermon and going to confession in English. The consequences may be imagined. This problem has already been discussed and one hopes that before very long some step will have been taken to solve it, but of course such matters require time. A zealous and sensible priest willing to go for a while at least as pastor of a parish for English-speaking Catholics would find, in addition to spiritual consolation, ready coöperation and generous recognition; and if his lot be cast in a beautiful city like Santiago de Chile he may find his missionary vocation more enduring than he expected.

A parting word: About two hours by rail from Buenos Aires is the celebrated shrine of Our Lady of Lujan. It is an old and famous center of pilgrimage not for Argentina only but for all South America and even North America. Surrounding the image of the Blessed Virgin you will see the banners of all the nations of America—except one. This is symbolic. There, in a beautiful church to which pilgrims flock day after day, is mute testimony to the lack of interest taken by us in our Catholic brethren to the southeast. Can't we even send them a flag?

REV. EDWIN RYAN.

THE STUDENTS' APOSTOLATE

Sioux City, Iowa.

TO the Editor: A department of Catholic Action called the Students' Apostolate has been organized at Trinity College, Sioux City, Iowa, by Brother William F. Ferree, S.M. The purposes of this organization are: (a) to make the students acquainted with the major problems of today, and to show them the Catholic solution; (b) to prepare the students for future leadership in modern Catholic Action; (c) to provide the students with opportunities to engage in actual leadership now.

The members of the Students' Apostolate are recruited from among the students of Trinity College, and only those join who are willing to give part of their time to modern Catholic Action and to the study of the problems which that implies.

There are seven departments of activity in the Students' Apostolate as it is now organized. The activities of these departments are:

1. The Department of Organization will maintain correspondence with other Catholic organizations to secure from them helpful suggestion for the work of the Students' Apostolate, and will cheerfully give to others any possible assistance. The information accumulated by various means will be published periodically to all the students of Trinity.

2. The Department of Catholic Press will strive to bring about among the students a thorough appreciation of the necessity and value of a wide-read Catholic press. It will try to put a Catholic periodical in the home of every Trinity student.

3. The Department of Catholic Literature aims to put at the disposal of the members the foremost contemporary Catholic books and periodicals, and to acquaint the students with the modern revival in English Catholic literature. It sends a copy of the weekly, *Trinity College Spiritual Bulletin,* to all the high schools in the diocese.

4. The Department of Apologetics is at present putting its efforts into a series of historical and dogmatic charts which will make for a clearer understanding of Catholic faith and history, and which may later be published, subject to approval.

5. The Department of Catholic Education will study the problems and ideals of Catholic education, and each member of the department will strive to get one Catholic student attending a public school to go to a Catholic school next September.

6. The members of the Department of Social Action will strive to become familiar with Catholic social principles, especially as set forth in the encyclical letters of Leo XIII and his successors in the Holy See. As students, their activity will almost necessarily be restricted to the mere study of these principles and of their application in home, industrial and civic life.

7. The members of the Department of Missions will try to become familiar with the needs of Catholic missions, and render them any active assistance which will be open to students.

Nil Invito Episcopo is the motto of the Students' Apostolate. With the approval and encouragement of the Right Reverend Bishop, which it enjoys, and the blessing of God, the Students' Apostolate of Trinity College will endeavor to contribute its mite to a greater Catholic Action.

REV. WALTER C. TREDTIN, S.M.

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CHESS

Baltimore, Md.

TO the Editor: I have before me your issue of January 14, containing Mr. John Bunker's reply to my letter in which I took issue with him in the matter of chess being comparable to the art of war.

It is not unusual in any controversy to misunderstand and to be misunderstood; and words, even when used by Mr. Bunker, do sometimes hide the writer's meaning. My worthy controvertist accuses me of begging the question and I would, indeed, be guilty of the charge if I had taken for granted that there were great military leaders who were also great chess players, in order to prove that very point. I undertook, however, to prove nothing of the sort, but simply pointed out that I am no better equipped than is Mr. Bunker to prove that point, concerning which he said in his letter of November 19 that his knowledge is "negative." He now informs us that he meant to deny such instances exist and not that he was uninformed in the matter, and forthwith challenges me to prove otherwise. His use of the word "negative" is truly unfortunate, as he seems to have such positive knowledge that Napoleon was a poor player and further states regarding great military leaders, "though there may have been *some* (sic!) who were *adepts* (sic!), I do not know of any who rose above mediocrity." Since "adept" signifies "well-skilled, proficient," I fail to see how there could be adepts who did not rise above mediocrity. If Mr. Bunker doubts there were any such adepts, it by no means proves there were none. And if there were such adepts, being great military leaders, they were not without a knowledge of strategy and it is reasonable to suppose they used it to fine effect in playing chess.

It is evident also that Mr. Bunker does not believe in clothing the pale bones of logic with glowing flesh through the power of constructive imagination. Further, in saying that it has been a tradition that great battles have been planned on the chess-board, I neither affirmed nor denied that this is true; but inferred that it was worthy of consideration and, for my own part, I shall look further into the matter. My reference to Napoleon and to the fact that as a strategist he met his Waterloo was merely a bit of pleasantry and was not offered as substantial proof.

Proceeding from this point, the purpose of my letter was, evidently (but not so evidently to Mr. Bunker, who beclouds the issue), to lend plausibility to the opinion that the strategy of chess is comparable to strategy in war which, after all, is the main point at issue and a discussion of which would be interesting and instructive to those who play chess and who realize that it has educational value. My holding to that point does not require for proof that great military leaders were likewise great chess players—a *non-sequitur,* of which I plead "not guilty."

Finally, Mr. Bunker did imply that the comparison is untenable because of the dissimilarity at the beginning of a game of chess and of an engagement on the field of battle. And, in stating that this proved nothing with respect to a display of similar strategic skill, I also leave it to impartial critics to say whether I put forward a respectable argument. However, as I left Mr. Bunker "gasping," probably by this time he has found his second wind sufficiently to show that a flank movement, or the devastating center-attack or wedge-like movement, or the weakening of the opponent's wings—as being in line with good tactics on the field of battle—are all absent in the playing of a game of chess.

JOSEPH JACOBI.

ECONOMIC DISTRESS

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

TO the Editor: In a recent letter I said that the real cause of the present world-wide economic distress is not economic, but religious or spiritual. Some men are beginning to see this truth. Many of prominent position and achievement have expressed their recognition of the fact.

Former President Coolidge recently said that there is a spiritual cause for the present bad times. Will Rogers said a short time ago that the Lord has put us where we belong. In a recent communication to the cardinals the Pope recognized the fact that world-wide economic depression has been caused by spiritual rather than by economic factors.

Roger W. Babson, well-known economist and statistician, recently delivered the following fine utterance: "People should understand that before prosperity can return, there must be a renewed interest in the spiritual life by both individuals and nations. Nations should realize that the world has always possessed raw materials and labor, but has been prosperous only when the people have been actuated by a religious faith to use these resources for advancement and service. This is the law of life, and now is the time when it should be taught in churches, schools and colleges."

Colin Ross, world traveler, said in the Berlin *Vossische Zeitung* (as translated in the January *Living Age*): "The world crisis is here. That is the one great conclusion that I reach. I am convinced that it is really a world crisis, not a stock-market depression and not one of those regular dips in the business cycle. Rather is it a convulsion of all the spiritual, intellectual foundations that underlie our culture. Indeed, the crisis even represents a gradual crumbling of these foundations themselves. . . . Furthermore, those who claim to be leaders of peoples and nations have not yet risen to the occasion, though this does not mean that those who are striving to take their places could perform their tasks half so well."

It is something to the world to know where it stands and accordingly strive to remedy conditions.

CHARLES HOOPER.

THE TROUBLE WITH OUR WORLD

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO the Editor: Mr. John Moody under the caption, "The Trouble with Our World," in your issue of January 21, tells the world in words crystal clear precisely what its trouble is and furthermore, tells just as clearly what the remedy is.

Would that every newspaper in the land would print this clarion call to a "return to the verities"; that every leading economist would ponder over it and that business leaders would grasp the significance of its truths.

GEORGE A. ANSLEY.

DIALOGUE IN HEAVEN

Milwaukee, Wis.

TO the ditor: A mistake occurs in my article, "Dialogue in Heaven," printed in the January 14 issue of THE COMMONWEAL. In the seventh line of the second colume, the date "1855" should be "1885."

I have glanced at my carbon copy and the "mea culpa" must come from my own lips. It reminds me of Chesterton's comment on Belloc's "History of England"—"only two dates, and one of them wrong."

REV. FRANKLYN J. KENNEDY.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Barretts of Wimpole Street

MISS KATHERINE CORNELL signalizes her entrance into the actor-manager field by presenting Rudolf Besier's uneven but highly interesting play on the romance of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett.

On the whole, it comes as a great relief to find Miss Cornell once more in a play with some pretense to distinction. It has been a rather painful experience for those who feel that she is one of the most talented of our actresses to follow her through the mazes of "The Green Hat," "Dishonored Lady" and similar rubbish. I think I have remarked before in connection with these recent plays that Miss Cornell seems to have a curious habit of shedding glamor about unusually sordid or uninteresting characters. Judging from her acting, one would say that she was indulging in a form of self-hypnosis and reading into the exceedingly commonplace something which does not belong there. In "The Letter," for example, another play of mediocre qualities, Miss Cornell gave the character of its frail heroine a background never even hinted at by any lines of the author.

At all events, we now have a play for whose selection, production and entire atmosphere Miss Cornell is solely responsible, and it unquestionably represents a pleasing and engaging contrast to most of her recent vehicles. In the first place, it is chock full of strong and healthy romance without the least suggestion of mawkish sentimentality. In the second place, it achieves a distinct poetic and literary flavor without indulging in poetic prose. It has one objectionable and quite unnecessary feature—namely, the characterization of Edward Barrett, the father. There is a broad and definite implication that, in addition to his domineering cruelty, he was afflicted with an abnormal psychological attachment for his oldest daughter. Throughout the play, Barrett violently opposes anything savoring of love affairs in the lives of his various daughters. As soon as he senses the real nature of Robert Browning's devotion to Elizabeth, he prepares to move his entire family, bag and baggage, into a remote part of the country. Faced by this possibility, Robert Browning insists that Elizabeth marry him at once so that she can get out of the atrocious atmosphere of the Wimpole Street house. Elizabeth asks for twenty-four hours in which to make her decision. She is then witness to a scene of unusual cruelty between her father and her youngest sister, Henrietta. It is this scene which determines her to marry Browning at once. It is not until her decision is wholly made and acted upon that she has the particular encounter with her father which reveals his curious psychological abnormality. The only effect of this discovery is to hasten her actual departure from the house by about a half hour. It has nothing whatever to do with her major decision to marry Robert Browning. As a matter of fact, when the above scene occurs, she has already been married to Browning four or five days and is merely waiting for the best moment to make her escape from the Wimpole Street house. The injection of this particular note, therefore, is quite gratuitous in the sense that it does not supply a direct motive for any major action of the play. It is possible, of course, that the author felt that only such a revelation of Barrett's underlying character could serve adequately to explain his actions throughout the play. The whole scene in question is handled with restraint, but is a discordant note in what is otherwise one of the most beguiling stage romances of recent years.

The story of the play concerns that part of Elizabeth Barrett's life during which she was a bed-ridden invalid. Her meeting with Browning begins to restore her real desire to live and ends literally by lifting her from the grave. It would be difficult to describe, without violence to the essential tenderness of the theme, the way in which Browning's influence gradually surrounds and absorbs her life. Long before meeting him, she has carried on quite a correspondence with him as a result of his comments on some of her published poems. There are few things so difficult on the stage as to give vitality and force to the intuitive minds of poets—to that quality by which they can know and understand each other, through what their poems reveal, even without an actual meeting. Mr. Besier has managed this with the utmost skill and largely by depicting Browning as an exceedingly manly and impulsive person, quite capable of lifting the frail Elizabeth to her feet and utterly determined in his love and devotion. There is no effort to convince the audience that these two people are poets through the use of poetic imagery in their dialogue. Mr. Besier is content to rest his case on the fact that they do understand each other, without attempting in any way to elaborate their sympathetic insight.

Much of the credit for the vivid beauty of the play, however, must go to the acting of Miss Cornell herself and of Brian Aherne, who takes the part of Browning. Miss Cornell has dropped many of the irritating mannerisms which have spoiled so much of her recent work and has gone back to the direct and ardent simplicity of her memorable performances in "Candida." It is really only in the closing scenes of the play that she comes dangerously near to the border line of exaggeration. For the rest, she displays the intensity of her emotions and the difficulty of her decision by very effective understatement and by admirable restraint. Mr. Aherne gives a performance of astonishing sweep and power. The manuscript of the play gives but little indication of the splendid abandon which Mr. Aherne has read into the part. In many ways, this is one of the most difficult parts which an actor could be assigned. It requires freshness, spontaneity, strength, earnestness and the utter conviction of sincerity—all of this combined with quick and manly humor and abounding vitality. There are many of his lines which would be actually ridiculous if not spoken as Mr. Aherne speaks them, with exactly the right intonation and with perfect timing.

There are several other parts in the play which are also exceptionally well taken. Margaret Barker is the very soul of outraged rebellion as Henrietta Barrett. John Buckler also carries off the stiff and vigorous part of Captain Surtees Cook, the suitor for Henrietta's hand, without permitting it to degenerate into caricature. Miss Cornell is to be richly congratulated on the general beauty and artistic sincerity of this production, which cannot be dimmed even by Mr. Besier's overemphasis of Edward Barrett's sinister mental derangement. (At the Empire Theatre.)

Peter Ibbetson

THERE can be no doubt at all as to the reality of the pleasure evinced by the audience at the first performance of Deems Taylor's "Peter Ibbetson" at the Metropolitan Opera House. The extent of the applause after the two last acts was limited neither to the claque nor to friends of the composer—it was general and generous. And so at last an American opera

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has arrived which may continue for several years in the operatic repertory. The reasons for this are evident. First and foremost is Mr. Taylor's choice of a story. Du Maurier's novel is romantic, sentimental, the characters painted with broad strokes, the good ones very good, with a very popular villain, with a suffering hero, with a dream hitched to telepathy, the story told simply yet dramatically. "Peter Ibbetson" may not be a great novel, but it is a touching one, and one which an age wearied of photography and cynicism might very well find strangely attractive. And this was exactly what happened when a few years ago Miss Constance Collier made a dramatization of it, and John and Lionel Barrymore played the two Ibbetsons. It is this dramatization which formed the basis of Mr. Taylor's libretto. It is a story which lends itself peculiarly to operatic treatment. When added to this there is such a superb casting, such magnificient musical direction and such admirable scenic investiture as the Metropolitan's management gave it, it is no wonder that the work brought the response that it did. This of course does not take into account Mr. Taylor's music.

How great a part the music played in the success of the opera might very well be debated. One thing, however, is certain: Mr. Taylor never allowed the composer to get in the way of the dramatist. This writer found nothing original, striking or poignant in the music, nothing which by the wildest stretch of the imagination could be said to add to musical or operatic literature. There was nothing personal, nothing which was Taylor and Taylor alone. With the exception of Colonel Ibbetson's song in the first act, and the introductions of old French songs, Mr. Taylor studiously avoided any set arias, his method of writing vacillating between that of Puccini, Wagner and Debussy. This seemed a pity, for although Mr. Taylor is not a creative melodist his only set piece showed that he can write gracefully in the French parlor manner, while the method he did choose was valuable only in that as incidental music it allowed the libretto to be understood. There was in it certainly no musical characterization and no simple emotional appeal. The score was facile, but little more. But whatever the limitations of the music the performance was splendid. Edward Johnson's characterization of Peter was perhaps the finest thing this admirable artist has ever done, while Miss Bori's Duchess of Towers, Mr. Tibbett's Colonel Ibbetson, Miss Telva's Mrs. Deane, and Mr. Rothier's Major Duquesnois, were almost equally excellent. Mr. Serafin's conducting was masterly.

What was specially admirable in most of the singers was the clarity of their enunciation. The opera is in two languages, and the scenes in English were equally as understandable as those in French. And here may be raised the only quarrel with the libretto. English unlike French has two languages, one for prose and one for poetry; and the prose one, which was the one employed in the opera, is simply not fitted for musical treatment. When once or twice a poetic phrase was uttered the difference was felt instantaneously—the words and music became a unit. The reason that English oratorio and old English songs possess the beauty they project is largely due to the fact that they are written in poetic diction and phrasing. Had their diction and phrasing been of the type of the things sung in "Peter Ibbetson" they would never have lasted. English is as well fitted for song as French or German—but not all English. A poet as well as a composer is necessary for English song and for English opera. Why with the greatest poetic literature of the world to draw from do our composers continue to set their tunes to prose?

GRENVILLE VERNON.

BOOKS

A Lover of Mankind

Leigh Hunt, by Edmund Blunden. New York: Harper and Brothers. $4.00.

THE FAULT inherent in Mr. Blunden's work is a fault inherent in the subject itself: in the book Leigh Hunt fails to dominate the background against which he is portrayed, just as in life he failed to emerge from the welter that we call the Romantic Revival. It was his tragedy that, endowed with talents sufficient to have distinguished him as among the first rank in any previous age except perhaps the Elizabethan, he should have had to number Keats, Shelley, Lamb, Hazlitt, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and the rest up to and including Browning and Tennyson among his contemporaries. And it is Mr. Blunden's difficulty that he must disengage his hero from a company such as this and limn him in the light of his own achievement.

To appreciate the fact that the difficulty has been surmounted, granting always the aforesaid handicap, it is but necessary to realize Mr. Blunden's delicate hadling of the Italian episode, his detached record of Hunt's financial unaccountability, his fairness to Marianne Hunt, his tact in referring to Hunt's political and social opinions, and his skill in dealing with a score of other highly debatable questions. One reading is sufficient to show that Mr. Blunden's ten years of labor have not been in vain.

And well might a biography of Leigh Hunt require ten years for the making. Previous attempts have proved both biased and inadequate, unused materials on both sides of the Atlantic lay untouched for years, and, moreover, so deeply overshadowed was he by his contemporaries that what were important matters during his life come down to us in mere hints because of the greater interest in greater men who had to be appreciated and given their true proportion.

For more and more in our day is Leigh Hunt taking shape as an influence of paramount importance. Born in 1784 and dying in 1859, he began his career during the regency and continued active until the Victorian age was fully developed. Commencing as an author in time to introduce Keats to a hostile public and ultimately to champion Wordsworth and Coleridge, he retained his prestige as a critic long enough to be among the first to urge Tennyson as the logical laureate. And during his long career he seems to have failed to recognize the worth of but two distinguished writers, John Clare and Thomas De Quincey; although, as Mr. Blunden remarks, if one were to search through the reviews that have not yet come to light, even these might be discovered to have been properly adjudged. Surely, if Mr. Symond's test of a critic—that he is good according to his judgments of his contemporaries—be just, then Leigh Hunt must be numbered among the best, for he chose as time has chosen for us, unerringly, the most perfect writing of his day.

He is, for us, primarily a critic, and not only of pure literature but of the drama as well—for at twenty-four he was the foremost dramatic critic of his time, and, in fact, no undue bias is required to think of him as the father of dramatic criticism. Nevertheless, he must also be remembered as a poet and an essayist. If literature is not much the richer for "The Story of Rimini," it would be the poorer without "Abou Ben Adhem." And although his writings contain nothing to compare with Lamb's "Dream Children" or Hazlitt's "My First Acquaintance with Poets," we have little that is better than

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"A Now," "On Getting Up on Cold Mornings," "Hats," "Walking-Sticks" and 'The Waiter." However it is enough that he be remembered as a critic although as such he must remain within the shadow of the men whom he helped to fame.

It is as a critic that he emerges in Mr. Blunden's admirable account of his life in spite of an obvious effort to distinguish him as a poet, an effort which is perhaps not unnatural on Mr. Blunden's part. For he himself is a poet, and of distinction, one of whom we have heard all too little on this side of the ocean. Besides, he is an able editor, having issued the most illuminating editions of Clare, Vaughan, and Collins that have thus far appeared. Himself a blue-coat boy like his hero, and like his hero a poet and a critic, perhaps it would not come amiss, because of his evident sympathy for the obscure and the unfortunate at the hands of fame, and because of his appreciation of the beautiful—again like his hero—perhaps it would not come amiss to tag him with a line from the work of that hero, characterizing them both at the stroke:

"Write me as one who loves his fellow men."

GEORGE CARVER.

The Poetry of Conrad Aiken

John Deth, and Other Poems, by Conrad Aiken. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

MR. AIKEN'S new book appears in a format of special dignity, and bears the reminder that its author was honored by the Pulitzer Prize in poetry for 1929. "John Deth," like Mr. Aiken's earlier production, bears the traits of a genuine lyric sensibility; it is distinguished alike by a graceful fluidity of style, and by an ingenious allegorical treatment of psychological material. It exhibits, moreover, a true literary personality. Mr. Aiken has perhaps suffered unduly under charges of extreme and vacillating derivation from his contemporaries. It must be admitted that he has echoed unmistakably the various tones of Imagism and Edgar Lee Masters, Eliot and Robinson, and even so recent a poet as Archibald MacLeish. His poetry has inevitably suffered through his acumen and sympathy as a critic. The surface-effects of "John Deth" are reminiscent of so ancient a poem as Lindsay's "Chinese Nightingale," and again of Miss Sitwell's baroque elaborations, while in dramatic essentials it is worth comparing with the analytical poems of Robinson, a contemporary who has in some degree influenced Mr. Aiken's work by supplying models of high narrative refinement and austerity. But Mr. Aiken's psychological method, meticulous and detailed though it can be, is seldom concerned with objective analysis, and it never approximates the detached and lucid accuracy which distinguishes Mr. Robinson's insight into his problems.

The title poem here, as well as the shorter poems which accompany it, is essentially a study in the misty, ill-defined processes of disillusionment and personal frustration which take place below the level of consciousness, and thus defy objective presentation. Mr. Aiken has had the courage, in all his more important works, to undertake a poetic investigation of those states of reverie and subconscious experience wherein, according to Freudian psychology and its elaborations, the salient issues of personality are described. In order to make these problems poetically available, Mr. Aiken has devised a theory of musical equivalence of poets, and has devoted a good deal of effort to its exegesis in his prose writings. This theory has found practical application in "The Jig of Forslin, Senlin, and Punch"; it reappears, allegorically disguised, in "John Deth," and in some of the shorter poems in the volume, especially

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NEXT WEEK

Canon Ernest Dimnet in WAR OR PEACE? analyzes the present European situation and shows the basis of the reports of American travelers abroad that the possibilities of another war in Europe are nearer than we like to suspect. The probable alignments which Canon Dimnet foresees in case of a new conflict, are enormous. All this talk of war, we realize, is burdensome, but we believe that only by an understanding of the situation and the exertion of vigorous preventive measures may the detonation of war hysteria and intransigent action be forestalled. . . . In PLAINSONG AND DEBUSSY, by Thérèse Lavauden, the influence of Gregorian rhythm and melody is shown upon music that is often considered modern in the sense of having had no counterpart. . . . USES OF ADVERSITY, by Terence O'Donnell, discloses with real feeling the treasure of the poor—a treasure that will perhaps have more appreciators now than at another time. . . . The struggle of labor to possess not only a greater share of what it produces but also a greater control over the social conditions of life, is shown to be a counter to the tendency in the capitalist system whereby the productive process is not limited by the satisfaction of necessities but aims at amassing unearned incomes, in CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY, by F. J. Eble, and to have had an instructive precedent in the middle ages. The solution of the struggle, pointed out by the writer, would seem to be the only hope of salvation for the capitalistic system. . . . A JASON OF THE GAELS, by Ethel M. Smith, is a story full of suggestions of the delightful possibilities of life in a cottage and the terrors to a simple spirit in our crowded places of ultramodernity.

"Meeting," "At a Concert of Music," "The Pomecitron Tree" and several sonnets. This slow, modulated music of lyric reverie achieves its moments of extraordinary beauty, but I think that everyone must feel how far short of a convincing demonstration Mr. Aiken's work falls.

In the first place, he fails of inventive genius. In the second place, it is to be doubted that he has fully established for himself the correspondence between the unconscious and its musical equivalents. His poems are vague where they should be definite, cloudy where they should be clear, and mystically symbolic where the psychological problem demands sharp definition.

Mr. Aiken's shortcomings are the result of considerable courage. They do not nullify the lyric beauty of his finest parts. But they may be traced to a confusion of motives which largely explains his subordination to the finest poetic talents of the day.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

Strange Gallantry

Henry of Navarre, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. $5.00.

IN VIEW of the steady stream of biographical works, it has been not a little curious to note the absence of a life of Henry IV of France, variously known as Henry the Great, or Henry of Navarre. Especially curious, since his colorful life against a grand opera background should have been a choice morsel for many a writer of modern biography. Imagine a prince of the blood born while his mother sang a song so that he "should not be born a cry-baby," whose grandfather "rubbed his lips with a bit of garlic" and gave him a sip of wine. Certainly a dramatic entrance into life, into France in the midst of the sixteenth century.

This absence has only partly been remedied by Mr. Sedgwick; for those who enjoy biography à la Maurois may be somewhat disappointed with Mr. Sedgwick's almost reticent treatment of the *Vert Galant*. And those who are "curious," according to the author's preface, must suffer equal disappointment; for in an effort to offend none, Mr. Sedgwick has tried to please all. From the preface, which might be construed as an apology, we gather that there is more to King Henry and his period than Mr. Sedgwick chooses to divulge. More's the pity.

Somehow we do not glean from Mr. Sedgwick's volume, the tremendous significance of the period that ushered in the first of the Bourbons; nor do we comprehend the reasons for the failure of Protestant reform in France. The character of Henry's mother, Jeanne d'Albret, who plays an important rôle, is not fully explained. For instance, no mention is made of her betrothal to the Duke de Clèves whose alliance against Charles V Francis I thereby hoped to obtain. Nor are we given to understand Jeanne's change from Catholicism to Calvinism; from a gay, vivacious and carefree princess to a grim, severe reformer who, d'Aubigné said, "had nothing of the woman about her but her sex."

We fail to get a comprehensive picture of the intrigues that inaugurated the civil wars. The formidable family of the Guises, pitted against the favorite Montmorencys, against both of whom, some say, Francis had warned the dauphin, Henry II, were admitted to favor. And the balance of power was maintained by the king's mistress, Diane de Poitiers, his senior by twenty years, while his queen, Catherine de'Medici, her Italian blood boiling with humiliation, helplessly looked on and brooded on revenge.

The death of Henry II and the subsequent accession of his ill-fated son, Francis II, is briefly dismissed. Nevertheless his

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marriage to Mary, later Queen of Scots, a niece of the redoubtable Duke de Guise and the wily Cardinal de Lorraine, established these two as guardians of the boy king to the exclusion of the Bourbons and Condé, princes of the blood. This may have been the cause of the alignment of many of the small nobility on the side of Calvinism and surely precipitated the bloody conspiracy of Amboise.

These and many other omissions in Mr. Sedgwick's biography give it the semblance of a performance of legerdemain: we see the execution of the trick but fail to comprehend the method. History would have been served better if Mr. Sedgwick had paused a moment to explain the reasons for certain events as well as account for the actions of certain people. With motives unexplained, these actions and events reduce themselves to what we now have, an interesting and smoothly flowing narrative. But in the light of modern psychology and our comprehension of political science, we would have been more grateful if the causes for wars, massacres, assassinations and their concomitant evils had been explained to the "curious" reader.

MAXIM LIEBER.

Pirate and Patriot

Lafitte the Pirate, by Lyle Saxon. New York: The Century Co. $5.00.

THE STORY of the settlement and development of Louisiana is one of the most unique in American history. This state has served three flags: Spanish, French, and finally in 1803, when the Louisiana purchase was consummated, it became an American possession, inhabited by a widely varied group of hybrid stock. This languid country with its strange mingling of bloods is understood by only a few, of whom Lyle Saxon is one. In his "Old Louisiana" and "Fabulous New Orleans" Mr. Saxon has caught and preserved the spirit of places and events; and now in an unusually exciting biography he presents to us Jean Lafitte—rogue, pirate, diplomat, business executive, dandy, hero—and the fascinating tale of his operations in the Gulf of Mexico and Louisiana.

The Lafitte brothers, Jean and Pierre, in the early nineteenth century operated a blacksmith shop in New Orleans. But the forging business was conducted only as a ruse to detract attention from their activity and interest in the Baratarians, who lived among the islands in the sea-marshes along the Louisiana coast, and who were engaged in the highly profitable business of smuggling. Under Jean's leadership more than a thousand men did their pirating with more than a hundred ships. The privateering of the organization first was against Spanish slave-ships, and then became a menace to all shipping.

Governor Claiborne of Louisiana announced a reward for Jean's capture, but the bold young Frenchman strutted about the streets of New Orleans and was not molested; he represented a fearless and dangerous group of followers who would do anything at his command. A few days later similar posters appeared in the city offering a higher reward for the capture of the governor, and were signed, "Jean Lafitte." But the persistent governor soon captured Jean's brother, Pierre, together with several of their lieutenants. Jean was in hiding.

Then came the War of 1812. General Jackson was in New Orleans with a small and sickly army. Knowing that the British forces would outnumber his own, the general was quick to accept Jean's offer of ships and experienced men. Jean, of course, stipulated that all of his imprisoned followers be freed. Jackson won the battle and in his report to President Madison highly lauded Lafitte and his men for their share in the victory.

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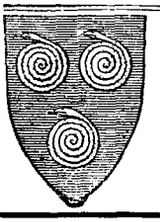
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The President, in turn, pardoned the brothers for all bygone crimes, and they were reinstated to citizenship.

But Jean, like the pirate king in the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, would not forsake his trade:

> "For I'll be true to the song I sing
> And live and die a pirate king."

The business was again begun with headquarters in Texas, but his tactics were too well known by this time, and his newly-organized band, operating from Galveston, was conquered by governmental force. He was given a certain amount of time to leave Galveston. He vacated, and "the last of the great pirates" sailed away in the light of the burning town.

Mr. Saxon has brought Lafitte out of the dim, legendary past, and has made him a living part of American history. All this he has done in a charming and convincing way. One wishes more biographers would do this sort of producing, and that there were more Suydams to illustrate the books.

Eric Devine.

The Bible of Buddhism

The Lotus of the Wonderful Law, by W. E. Soothill, New York: Oxford University Press. $6.00.

SINCE 1925 Dr. Soothill, professor of Chinese at Oxford University, has published four books, of which the above is one. It is apparently the second upon religious subjects pleasing to Asiatics. The wonderful or mystic law is often said to be the most important religious book of those lands in which Buddhism still holds sway. It is called by some "the Gospel of half Asia." Thus, according to Dr. Saunders: "What the Gospel of Saint John is to the Christian, the Bhagavadita is to the Hindu, and such is the Lotus of the Wonderful Law to the Buddhist of far eastern Asia."

It is this book which Dr. Soothill has translated, with the assistance of Mr. Bunno Kato, the recognized leader of the Nichiren sect of Buddhists in Japan, who knows the text of the mystic law by heart and is familiar with the many commentaries on this Sutra. The translation took four years.

There are two schools of Buddhism, called Hinayana and Mahayana, these terms meaning respectively the small vehicle and the great vehicle to those seeking salvation. Hinayana Buddhists seek salvation by the arduous road of works; Mahayana Buddhists profess that their creed or exposition opens a way finally for all to find salvation. The former are found in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, and the latter in China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Mongolia. The Hinayana considers itself the orthodox school, asserting that the Lotus Law is not in the ancient canon and does not contain what Sakyamuni said. To many of the Mahayana the mystic Lotus Law contains the final teachings of Buddha. But in spite of this, the two collaborators announce that "the Law of the Lotus never had any direct connection with Sakyamuni. It was a brilliant concept of a later age" (page 4). This conclusion is the same as that found in the teachings of the true sect of the Pure Land, which on page 51 says: "The Buddha Sakyamuni" left no writings of his own and all we have of his teachings come from "what his disciples retained in their memory and committed to writing after his death."

As regards its content, the volume has twenty-seven chapters, in which are included the four predictions, the three parables and the three merits and an essay on universal virtue. These seek to inculcate what may be called the accepted virtues and characteristics of an ethical-minded person. But none the less the Sutra is but a dramatic presentation of an earthly Buddha

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immensely glorified and set around with innumerable companions. It is obviously the work of a gifted dramatic artist, who gave to the world a grand religious drama, which still grips by its imaginative powers large numbers of Asiatics.

As a drama it should be judged. While for its translation and publication, gratitude and praise must be offered to Mr. Kato and Dr. Soothill as also to the Oxford University Press. The volume has a glossary of terms, an index, and some illustrations drawn from Chinese sources.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

Witty and Wise

Come To Think of It, by G. K. Chesterton. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company. $2.50.

THE AUTHOR of these forty-eight essays (reprinted from the *Illustrated London News*) once said the only way for two Dickens enthusiasts to discuss their idol was to shout quotations at each other. The one Chesterton enthusiast here involved is tempted to adapt the principle. Mr. Chesterton has attained such solid, accumulated significance in the general mind that his philosophy as a democrat, a Distributist and a Catholic, needs no introduction. And why try to paraphrase his wit and pith, when the wit and pith themselves may be quoted?

Confronted by a rich, random collection like this, one's citations will also be random. One pauses to note again Mr. Chesterton's ability to say the fresh, re-creative thing about old topics, like the French temperament or Macaulay's political outlook. One admires again his instinct for getting at once to the essence of new fallacies, like psychoanalysis or eugenics: "It was the whole point of Oedipus that he did not have the Oedipus Complex"; "They introduce their horrible heresies [birth control and companionate marriage] under new and carefully complimentary names; as the Furies were called the Eumenides. . . . The sensitive youth of the future will not be called upon to accept forgery as forgery. It will be easy enough to call it homoeography or script-assimilation or something else that would suggest . . . that nothing was involved but a sort of socializing or unification of individual handwriting." One memorizes, perhaps, this admirably sufficient statement of the whole difficulty of literary censorship: "The plain truth is that modern society must have a morality before it can have a censor of morals." One enjoys the expert spoofing of those who should be spoofed, whether they proclaim that "Jubb has erased the mistake called Michelangelo" or observe that "Mossky's bust of Lady Smith is supreme in its lack of likeness and its collision of five geometric planes"; and one breathes, perhaps, one's deepest breath of assent to the classic paper on the mythological tendencies of scientists, who speak of Nature and Survival in a way to delude their followers by "the vision of a vast stone goddess sitting on a mountain throne, and pointing at a particular frog or rabbit. . . . We are quite ready to discuss trees and giraffes in their place, without perpetual references to God. Could the materialists not so far control their rhetorical and romantic sentimentalism as to do without perpetual reference to Nature?"

There is a generous allowance of papers on American topics, of which perhaps the most extraordinary deals with Lincoln. It gives a sense of having anticipated the Masters controversy, and solved it by admissions which leave the main point all the more secure: "He was of a very rare and very valuable race, whose representatives appear from time to time in history. He was one of the Failures who happen to succeed."

MARY KOLARS.

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Briefer Mention

St. Peter and the Profile, by John North. New York: Duffield and Company. $2.00.

MR. NORTH has found the technique of "Mrs. Dalloway" interesting to pursue in this comic satire of an aged, outmoded society portrait painter and the various personages implicated with him on the last day of his life. The stage is set when the old fellow, wandering through Greenwich Park, is attracted by the wonderful profile of an otherwise insignificant stenographer examining a ladder in her stocking. Her profile reminds him of the profile of a Grecian girl he had once seen years ago on his travels. The last ten years of his life he has been trying to recapture it and has gone almost insane in the attempt. Later in the same day at his club he nearly succeeds in recapturing that of the stenographer, but is interrupted. As he walks home, memory starts to lift the veil from his earlier travels. In reminiscing he is knocked down by a motor and killed. The chance acquaintance in Greenwich Park then becomes famous as Sir St. Peter Ledborough's "sketch"; her profile is broadcast on the boxes of a popular perfume. The first three chapters are good. But the yarn, though well written, is weak in plot and even with its element of mystery lapses after a time into diffuseness and artifice.

Child Training, by V. M. Hillyer. New York: The Century Co. New and revised edition, $2.00.

OUR KINDERGARTENS and early grades are burdened unnecessarily with children who might very well be instructed at home, if parents had confidence in their own ability as teachers. In Mr. Hillyer's book mothers will find a training scheme for children between babyhood and seven which is in no way inferior to the best public school practice, and immeasurably superior to the tweedledumheit of "progressive" education. The system aims to avoid common faults like emotionalism, exaggeration, license under the guise of freedom. It emphasizes drill and the formation of habits. The preface unguardedly states that the aim is "above all, healthier animals," but the book rises far above such level. We find a dubious proposal to "create originality," which throughout eternity has been a divine prerogative, and dire was the punishment of the heaven-scaling Titan who stole the gods' fire for mortals. But this is an excellent book for parents to read, particularly if they "mind" that what they take from a book is what they bring to the book.

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